בימים ההמה אשר יחזיקו עשרה
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חרותנו
Ḥerûṯênû, Our LIBERATION
Issue Five, August /September 2006

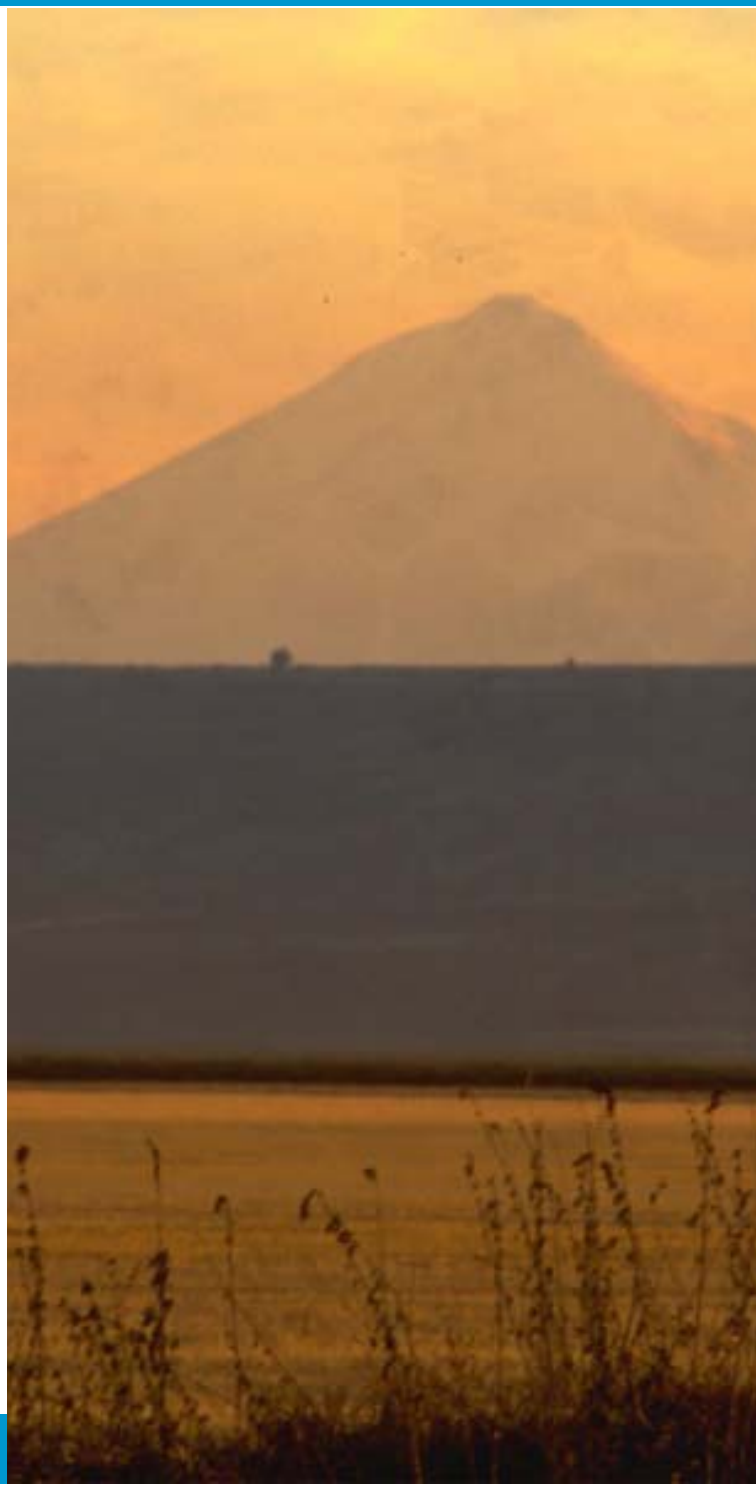
Do more than pray for Israel!

Once again Israel's enemies are attacking. This time they are using a terrorist army of the so-called *Party of God* (Hezbollah) acting as the army of Arab nations intent on destroying Israel and the Jewish People. This "army" uses fellow Muslims as human shields they leave behind to be bombed after they fire rockets and run away. In the past they have killed American Marines sleeping in their barracks and Israeli children sleeping in their beds. Hezbollah believes it does the work of its god who curses Israel.

One local church has displayed "Pray for Israel" out front. Do they truly want to help Israel? When Christians harass Jews, get us fired, conspire against us, or try to missionize us they aren't too far behind Hezbollah. Jews are Israel! Explain to your friends that prayer is not what we need from Christians. We need the freedom to be Jews without attack of any kind or from any religion. We do not want to hear how we should build a cemetery instead of a synagogue from a church member. Israel everywhere needs fewer enemies, not lip service.

שלמה

Thus saith Adonay YHWH; Behold, I am against thee, O Tsidon; I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and they shall know that I am YHWH, when I shall have judgments executed in her, and shall be sanctified in her. For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I am YHWH. And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the House of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am Adonay YHWH. Thus saith Adonay YHWH; When I have gathered the House of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob (Israel). —Ezekiel 28:22-25



The Ebionite Manifesto

The Ebionite Community is the living continuation of the Jewish religious movement of Jesus. Christianity is the religion of Paul and others, and not part of the biblical faith and revelation of the God of Israel nor is it of Jesus.

We declare the man Paul of Tarsus, the false teacher against the mark of Covenant and God's Torah, to be outside of the Way taught by Yeshua, the anointed, son of Miryam and Yosef.

Let his name, Paul, be accursed as he called God's Torah a curse. Let the afflictions he incited the gentiles to heap upon God's name and upon His People strike such great shame upon the gentiles that decent people among them will seek God in repentance from the man of Tarsus' Great Sin. Let the frontlets of their eyes and arm be bound with God's Torah and resist the mark of lawlessness.

We call upon the gentiles to repent, to abandon paganism and the perverse testament, and enter into true covenant through Torah, circumcision, and immersion in order to submit and prepare for the Reign of God as brothers exhibiting good works.

Your teachers, popes, ministers, priests, and leaders lead you to the outer darkness. They lie to you, rob you, abuse you, and use you to do likewise to others as they consume the whole world. They are idolaters who feed at Mammon's breast and have built the empire of Edom for two thousand years.

We expose your "apostle" as false; your "testament" as false; your society as false; your church, its rulers, your governments as false. Our allegiance and hope is to the God of Israel alone.

Yahwism, the faith of the Written Torah given by the One God, is a revolutionary system of life with justice that can supercede all other systems of government and ideologies. The Evyonim are Yahwists above all else. It allows for One Ruler, the God of Israel alone, with none beside Him. God is not man, and no man is divine. No man can make you right with God except yourself, and only you can atone for your sins through repentance and reparation to Him and your fellow man. You will never find God, Yahweh King of the Universe, world within worlds, worlds without end, in a church or shrine, kneeling before statues, sticks, stones, or men. Tear down your church and masjid. Take the wood and stones and build houses for the poor; take the sticks for firewood; sell the treasure and idols to buy food and heal the sick; bring all men in love to bend the knee to the God of Israel. **Yahweh Alone**.

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Calendar lûªḥ לוח

August /September 2006

Readings for Shabbat, August and September 2006

Week	Parasha	Haftara	Tehillim
July 30 -August 5	Wa'etkhanan: De 3:23-7:11	Isa 1:1-27	111-114
August 6–12	Ekev: Deu 7:12-11:25	Isa 49:14-51:3	115-120
August 13 –19	Re'eh: Deu 11:26-16:17.	Isa 54:11-55:5	121-125
August 20 –26	Shoftim: Deu 16:18-21:9	Isa 51:12-52:12	126-130
August 27 –Sept 2	Kiy Tetze: Deu 21:10-25:19	Isa 54:1-10	131-134
September 3–9	Kiy Tavo: Deu 26:1-29:8	Isa 60:1-22	135-139
September 10 –16	Nitzavim: Deu 29:9-30:20	Isa 61:10-63:9	140-143
September 17 –23	Wayyelekh: Deu 31:1-30	Isa 55:6-56:8	144-146
September 24 –30	Ha`azinu: Deu 32:1-30	2 Sam 22:1-51	147-150

Look for the New Moon (Rosh Ḥodesh) Days

From Jerusalem
Friday evening, August 25, 2006 (2%)
Saturday evening, September 23, 2006 (1%)

New Moon Reading: Genesis 1:14-18; Psalm 104; Psalm 89

Special Days

Yom T'ru`ah (Trumpets/"Rosh Hashana") evening of Saturday, September 23 through Sunday

CHRISTIANS?

ARE THEY SERIOUS?

Originally, I planned to write "Christianity: Is It Religion or Culture?" But after attending a Fourth of July celebration in a typical fundamentalist Christian town, I take a slightly different direction—inspired by the Christians I saw. The photo I took captures something very meaningful. We had sat under our little pavilion all day as the high pitched, nasal twang of gospel music shrieked in the background, interrupted only by voices "witnessing" a *Jesus* they do not know, imitating the well-rehearsed noise with which they had grown up.

Just then, out they came. The preachers. Every year it seems that they just aren't satisfied that this area, totally saturated with and controlled by Christians, is "right with God." They walk in the Fourth of July Parade following the rickety floats built on ATV trailers, shouting to the top of their lungs about going to hell and the failure to worship a Jewish man as a god.

It may actually be embarrassing to some of their fellow Christian residents. The photo cannot show the movement of people as they seem to give an "Oh boy! Here they go again!" look before ignoring them and walking on by. They did not embarrass us as much as they evoked pity. There they were, preaching to fellow Christians who still fell short of their own fervor, shouting like lunatics while nobody seemed to care or listen longer than a few annoyed seconds. I doubt the preachers could have bought serious attention.

While this is not the article I intended to write, it makes the points of that planned article. Christianity is noise that decorates a culture. That culture has not really ever changed from the days of the pipes' and cymbals' din, and frantic devotees amid the throngs of Rome. The familiar noise lulls their minds into a stupor in which they contentedly drowse through their lives. Someone occasionally changes names and alters appearances on their banners. The God of Israel has so more to offer than sideshows.

Schools of Ignorance

While conservative Christians attempt to control the country according to their mediaeval mindset, and seeking to eliminate any idea that doesn't conform to its private interpretation of morality or reality from the public schools, you might wonder what would it be like if they were successful. I know! The schools my children attended and I once taught in were thoroughly subservient to fundamentalist Christian fanatics.

Over 20 years ago I wept (I'm not a weeper) as I watched my son get on the school bus to begin "public" education. Bitter tears followed three years later when my daughters went to school. By then we were well-aware of the terrors that would be perpetrated against them. Like a fool, I tried to come to their rescue by becoming a teacher only to have the same evil re-directed toward me. And now my heart is breaking as my grandson reaches the date he will enter into Christian attempts to culturally indoctrinate him as well in the schools. We dreaded the dirty tricks and type of intolerance my son had already experienced.

All kids go through social problems, a schoolyard bully, thieves, competition and jealousy, and maybe even a pounding or two. Every child has an incompetent or hateful teacher here and there, and every parent will have to suffer the "educator" who looks down on them as the source of all the woes of their classroom. Children are put in many situations potentially devastating to their self-worth every day they participate in the school society whether it be making new friends, being late, not having homework finished, or standing up in front of the class. Of course, these days we could add avoiding sexual propositioning from teachers or being threatened with automatic weapons by fellow students unable to deal any longer. But for Jews and others in small Christian towns, we have more worries.

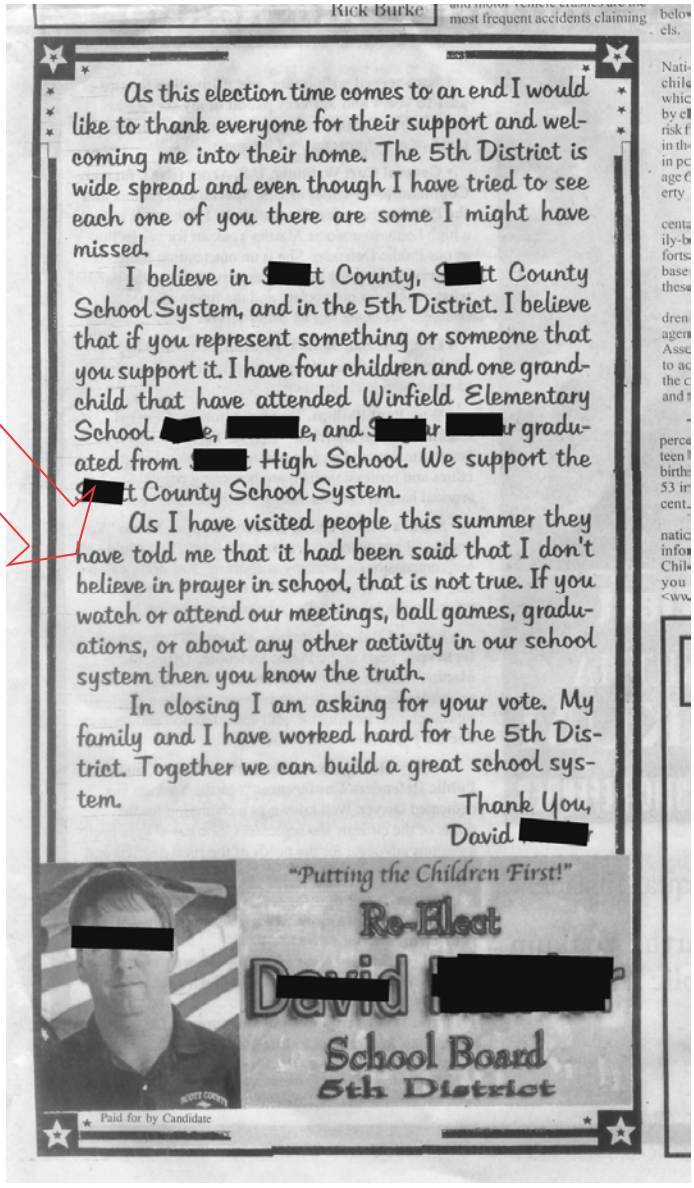
The fanatical Christians have a clear agenda. They want to make the public schools of America an extension of

the Christian church and Christian family regardless of non-Christians and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag they insist school children recite each morning with its claim of "liberty and justice for all." They want to rid public schools of standards and ideas independent of church leaders' interpretations and call such standards "secular humanism." (Yet they worship a human as a god.) They attack sex education, as well as multiculturalism (or *diversity*, the idea that minorities and their religious or cultural heritage is equally worthy to that of the majority, and that minorities have an equal place in society). They are opposed to any education that promotes values or social behavior or tolerance that cannot be controlled by their sectarian approval. They identify their efforts under vague and deceptive clichés like "pro-family," "family values," and "traditional values." To oppose them is to be labeled as being against family and values. They preserve their "value system" by imposing ignorance and suspicion of anything outside the Christian worldview. School prayer serves as their religious test.

For years the local churches have mobilized their members to elect school board members to impose the views of the Christian extremists on education of every child attending *public* schools in their area. While many areas of the country engage in well covered controversy and political battles, there are no battles where I live. The battle to have *real* public schools where every family can depend on liberty and justice for their child was lost long ago if it ever existed. What non-fanatics fear elsewhere we have been enslaved to from the beginning.

School prayer has never stopped at public events including ball games and graduations. Diversity is spoken of in the same tones here as s-e-x. You *can* be whatever religion you please, as long as you keep your mouth shut as you participate in Christian practices and programs. Talk about equality of religions or people under our Constitution and perhaps you'll get the same treatment I received—constant attack. Refuse to participate and be shoved into a corner, segregated from the class, like my son was by his kindergarten teacher (a relative!) because he "didn't love Jesus." In that same local school the administration office now features a Christianized American flag on its door!

This is the type of un-American person serving as a school board member here. In my experience with this person, and board I'm not sure to whom or what they would have children praying.


Rick Burke

most frequent accidents claiming

As this election time comes to an end I would like to thank everyone for their support and welcoming me into their home. The 5th District is wide spread and even though I have tried to see each one of you there are some I might have missed.

I believe in [redacted] County, [redacted] County School System, and in the 5th District. I believe that if you represent something or someone that you support it. I have four children and one grandchild that have attended Winfield Elementary School. [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] graduated from [redacted] High School. We support the [redacted] County School System.

As I have visited people this summer they have told me that it had been said that I don't believe in prayer in school, that is not true. If you watch or attend our meetings, ball games, graduations, or about any other activity in our school system then you know the truth.

In closing I am asking for your vote. My family and I have worked hard for the 5th District. Together we can build a great school system.

Thank You,
David [redacted]

"Putting the Children First!"
Re-Elect
David [redacted]
School Board
5th District
Paid for by Candidate

I will not list the cases of intolerance to non-Christian children such as mine have endured here in this *Christian* controlled public school system. But as I think of another generation going to these schools, I get the same sick feeling I have thinking of Jewish children being led off to the gas chambers 60 years ago, or Jewish children being stolen by the Church from their parents to be raised as Christians. Imagine your own children being left in the "care" of your enemies.

We are Americans, but Christian fundamentalists who use schools to treat us as enemies denies that.

A Letter

To My Children

From Dr. Gideon Benavraham

Profoundly shocked by the developments in the Middle-East, in which people are loosing their lives because of an ideology that maintains a spiral of violence, tramples on rights with impunity and with only the communication of the sharpened sound of missile explosions and weeping, I am coming to you with this letter. I really don't want ask you to accept my viewpoint or my Jewish convictions. For that I have a too high regard for you all. Sharing my viewpoint without due consideration should be an infringement on your freedom of imagination.

"In my humble opinion it doesn't matter WHAT your opinion IS, but THAT you HAVE an opinion". This statement I will elucidate in relation to a speech of Elie Wiesel in 1988, at the opening of an international exposition named: "Anti-Semitism: a history in imagination" in the Anne Frank House at Amsterdam. As we all know Prof. Elie Wiesel is an Auschwitz surviver, famous author, professor and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. Reading Wiesel's speech I thought: "I must discuss this with my children."

A part of the speech of Wiesel:

"Anti-Semitism is bad, not only for the victim, but also for the bystander. In the tragedy of the Second World War three phenomena existed: the murderer, the victim and the bystander. And without the onlooker, the bystander, the murderer never could have made so many victims.

"My entire life I tried to resist the unconcern of the bystander. This is because in the first case the Jews in the Second World War have been victims of this unconcern. I have always believed that the opposite of love isn't hatred, but unconcern. And that means the opposite of knowledge isn't ignorance, but unconcern. The opposite of hope isn't living without hope, which is, standing in life with an attitude of unconcern. The opposite of life isn't death, but unconcern regarding life and death. And because of this I believe that literature or arts or writing a book or teaching people or working in charity this all possesses one very target: combating the unconcern….

"…Unconcern will harm every thing, it makes us sleepy, and it kills, right before it really kills. Unconcern is the most treacherous of all dangers. When Auschwitz could not be successful in the extermination of anti-Semitism, what next? Racism and anti-Semitism does still exist, the foreigner is still in danger. That makes me scared. Anti-Semitism is the disease without cure.", so said Elie Wiesel.

You all are familiar with my highly placed historical consciousness. From the very past I have lived out of the concept: somebody who is ignores history is building a future on quicksand, because he never learned from history, and he is lapsing into the same mistakes!

Following the media in these days, hearing the national and international political statements, I've got a uneasy feeling because of the disqualification of reality by political correctness and the media's concern for the sentiments of their audience. The single-minded view of victims and refugees is the media view way, without inside information about the reality behind their images. Of course, it is bizarre, but the real truth is more bizarre. Therefore we have to study the backgrounds, as scientifically and objectively as possible. And that's what I am doing these long days, as you know.

My question to you all, as a result of Elie Wiesel's speech, is: "Does unconcern exist in your minds because of the perilous situation in the Middle-East? I really want discuss this item with you. Once again, I don't write you under the pressure of my personal conviction, but by an open communication being focussed on those matters which contribute to a "clash of civilizations", as a catastrophe as never before witnessed. As you know, I am not a pessimistic guy. I am a man of hope, strongly confirmed of the deeper senses of the present facts, even when

we don't see these hidden meanings directly.

I only want you to be informed about matters which generally never appear in the media. But nevertheless these facts are the most important as reliable results of scientific research. Therefore I will give you some eye-openers in this letter as subjects of further investigation if you choose.

As a contribution to the unmasking of unconcern and the political and religious processes in progress, I will deliver you a part of the farewell speech of Prof. Dr. Pieter W. van der Horst, professor of Judaica at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. In his speech he opened very fundamental and sometimes unknown data as a summary of his scientific conclusions concerning anti-Semitism. He has been very loud and clear. The Dean of the University however pressed him to keep his mouth shut about the most significant parts, because he was pointing to the Palestinians and the Arabic states who take their accusations and terror language directly from the European Nazi anti-Semitism.

Van der Horst has derived much evidence from the recent publication of Dr. Hans Jansen, lecturer at the Simon Wiesenthal Institute, Brussels. This publication of more than 1000 pages entitled "Van Jodenhaat naar zelfmoordterrorisme, islamisering van het Europees antisemitisme in het Midden-Oosten" (Anti-Semitism to Suicide, Terrorism, and Islamification in the Middle-East from European anti-Semitism).

Guys, read the quotations and take it as something worth becoming familiar with. Nobody who takes life seriously, can remain unconcerned. The Middle-East isn't far from home. It's touching us whereever we are going.

Van der Horst now.

Central in his speech stands the Christian myth from the Middle Ages about the Jewish cannibalism or anthropophagy. Nowadays in Arabic schools this Christian myth is a central part of the education program. The children are learning that the Jews kidnap non-Jewish children for [blood in] the preparation of the matzoth at Passover. Arabic mothers are warning their children never to go with a Jew, because they will be fattened and slaughtered for the Jewish Pesach meals. It seems to be a fairy tale, but this can really be found written in the Arabic papers, as Jansen profoundly documented.

The Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlass in 1983 published his doctorate thesis on Jewish ritual bloodthirstiness *as fact*, entitled "The Matza of Sion". Ever since it has been reprinted, translated into several languages, and is still available, standing on the bestsellers list in the Arabic countries. At one time this horror myth could be seen featured on the front page of an issue of the German Nazi-magazine *Der Stürmer* (May 1934) about alleged Ritualmord (Ritual Murder) [by Jews].

Now I only will quote his speech in part.

"Whoever after the Second World War optimistically hoped that this virulent range of ideas would have disappeared, has been deceived. In 1946 in Poland dozens of Jewish inhabitants have been victimized after accusation of ritual cannibalism. About ten years ago this accusation could be read again in a Romanian newspaper and in the same period on the White Russian television. Recently, winter 2005/2006, the Syrian Public Television broadcasted a program about Jews in which rabbis has been depicted as cannibals….

"By that we encounter a big and mondial problem, namely that the Islamic world has adopted the torch of the unfounded anti-Semitism of the European Nazi's and this torch is carried on with power and verve.

"…In the entire Islamic world, for years and years, day in day out, in newspapers, weekly journals, school books, radio and television broadcastings, sermons of imams, in lessons at schools and at universities, an inconceivable amount of anti-Jewish propaganda of the most horrible sort is continuously distributed all over to the people of the Middle-East. Also in innumerable cartoons, sometimes demonstrably and directly descended from the anti-Jewish press of the Nazis, they are creating an image of the Jewish people without equal in negativity. The theologian Hans Jansen has collected about 1500 cartoons, only from the last five years. All Jews are regularly bloodthirsty monsters, but more awful….

"As already said, the Jew, as a cannibal, is basic in this intensive campaign of hatred. On some cartoons Jews are portrayed devouring uncooked children. But also in books, TV-documentaries, internet websites and in motion-pictures, and even in scholarly publications this motif is frequently presented. Even in issues of which the rest of the world community knows that Jews have nothing to do with, the Jews have been blamed. Jews are accused of being behind the Sept. 11 Twin Towers attack; behind the Danish [Muhammad] cartoons; the recent Tsunami, communism, capitalism; etc. If it can undeniably be proven that something can't be true, for instance, when Osama bin Laden declares that he himself alone is responsible for the attack on the Twin Towers, still very few persons will think about it with an open mind They rather will switch off all rational arguments handling this cognitive resonance. Instead they conclude: Osama bin Laden is working for the Israeli Secret Service….

"And it is depressing that we can't speak about small groups of extremists, but about big masses of simple Islamic believers, profoundly brainwashed by their religious and political leaders….

"It isn't necessary speaking about Iran and its rabid anti-Jewish leaders, which has planned to exterminate Israel by a nuclear bomb. This regime, denying the historical holocaust, wanting to create a holocaust by itself, has formed the biggest threat for the continuation of the State of Israel since 1948: it is working in plain terms at an 'Endlösung' [extermination] ….

"In many Palestinian school books, year after year, children are educated about their holy obligation to destroy the Jewish people, because Jews are children of Satan who are resisting God, making conspiracies against all humanity and the Islam. The Jews never had any historical roots in Palestine, they are newcomers compared to the Palestinians and therefore they must be seen as an aggressive colonial force, only aimed at the destruction of Islam and therefore they have to be destroyed. And this entire teaching curriculum is continuously subsidized by the European Union, thus with your tax money and mine….

"Many people will give me the full criticism for the fact that I attribute the way of Islamic and especially Palestinian anti-Semitism to Nazi propaganda. They think it's really another story in the case of the Palestinians, and that this is originated with the Israelite occupation of Palestinian territory. But no, that's evidently nonsense. Passing over the significant fact that during the 19th century inside the Islamic countries of the Middle-East the series of accusations of Jewish cannibalism that generated murder and homicide, I will restrict myself with the next passage. Long, long before the occupation of the Palestinian territories, even long before the foundation of the State of Israel, namely from the Twenties of the last century, the Palestinians had a leader named Haj Amin al-Hoesseini, the Islamic grand mufti (the most important religious and juridical authority in the entire Palestine), who, right from the rise of Hitler in 1933 created close connections with this German dictator. During the war he was for many years in Berlin, advising Hitler with his plans to massacre the Jews. Anyone reading the formal and official reports of the discussions between both gentlemen can't suppress a shiver: how, from the bottom of their heart, they are agreed that the 'Weltjudentum' [World Judaism] and democracy have to be exterminated forever and ever. In 1944 the Palestinian leader visited Auschwitz together with Eichmann and was so very enthusiastic about the effectiveness of this method of murder, that he, after his return in Palestine, wanted an equal extermination camp in the neighbourhood of Nablus of his own, with one option: the country shall be completely 'Judenrein' (Nazi term free of Jews). After the war he said that it is most regrettable to him that he failed in implementing this high ideal and in 1948, just before the foundation of the State of Israel, he ordered the Palestinians to assassinate all Jews without any prisoners of war. Through his limitless anti-Semitism Al-Hoesseini becomes very popular far away from the borders of his country into the Islamic world. This islamofascist, this nazistic war-criminal, has been cheered by Yasser Arafat as 'the great hero of the Palestinian people', and as a shining example to the leaders of Hamas as well. The author of the charter of Hamas, Achmed Yassin, portraying himself as the most important successor to Al-Hoesseini, makes it clear in this charter that the combat against the State of Israel must be seen as only the first stage of the worldwide war of extermination against the Jews by the Brotherhood of Muslims. In the Palestinian resistance there always has been a strong undercurrent of islamofascism. Is it then any wonder that Hamas, after the assumption of power, immediately established very close relations with Iran? After all they are participants of the same ideal, and that is the ideal of the Nazis of Germany, the 'Endlösung', in spite of all smoke screens of big lies.…

"After Hitler's proclamation of the Nuremberg Race Laws in 1935, he received from the entire Arabic-Islamic world many congratulations. The very high sales figures of (Hitler's) *Mein Kampf* from that time till today affirm

this nazistic image clearly. The book was translated into Arabic during the Thirties. It's amazing and outrageous that exactly from this place of comment we can hear the allegation: Israelis are the new Nazis!"

Van der Horst finished his speech with the statement: "I don't suffer from Islamo-phobia, since I have had a good many experiences with Muslims, especially with Palestinian Muslims, . But it can never be allowed for us to keep our eyes shut to those matters we don't like or to those matters which aren't fitting to our blinded left-wing world view".

End of my quotations from the speech of Prof. Van der Horst.

I am finishing a short Tenach study on the Election of Israel and its place of service in the community of humanity, revealing Ha-Shem as YHWH. It's on the home stretch. I really hope that it becomes clear to me why anti-Semitism seems to be ineradicably present in the world. I am not looking for religious answers only. Israel's election has a covenantal and existential foundation and destination: bringing the Light of YHWH to the goyim [gentiles]. The Christian arguments of [Jews] being murderers of God are as silly as absolutely historical insufficient, for anti-Semitism is much older than the common era. The old myth of the cannibalism and other very old horror arguments originated in the Middle-East of the last century BCE and the first centuries CE are too crazy for words.
But … ?

I will invite you taking a look on the web site of the Arabic Press in the Middle-East. That's provided by MEMRI (Middle East Media Research). The url is: http://www.memri.org. Only one glimpse at this site reveals us of the truth of all I have written down in this letter. Listen and hear far away the historical echoes of the bragging of the Arabic-Palestinian ideology—of Adolf Hitler and his historical clan.

At the end of my letter I have chosen for a twofold ending, about unconcern and the influences of the media and politics.

First: if unconcern has strikes us, regardless of any reason, reconsider that unconcern, for it is of a crucial importance being strictly involved with all that happens on the belly button of the earth, the ultimate core position of our civilization and future.

Second: if the one-sided information of media and politics strikes us and you already have taken up a certain standpoint, be sure about your standpoint, but not until after a short appraisal of this information.

At the end a quotation of Socrates:
"Ignorance is truly the only evil in the world".

I can't leave this without a translation into the language of Elie Wiesel: **"Unconcern is the ultimate evil in the world".**

Receive my love and peace, and accept my certainty that someday the world will be a

- House of Peace
- Beth ha-Shalom
- Dar-al-Salaam.

Shalom ou-v'racha
Your Dad,
Gideon

Dr. Gideon Benavraham was once a Christian minister. He became a convert to the Yahwistic Faith, undergoing b'rit milah (circumcision) and now embraces faith and covenant with the God of Israel. I am glad to have been of aid in his rebirth. He resides in Breda, The Netherlands. He will be making more contributions to Our Liberation *in the future. Any mistranslation must be attributed to me. -SP*

The Kingdom of Israel

During the rules of David and Solomon the kingdom of Israel extended from Eilat in the extreme southern point and extended west beyond modern Amman, Jordan, Damascus, Syria, and reached the Euphrates River. Israel controlled most of Syria. Israel's Canaanite cousins were left as friendly neighbors in the trading city states (History calls them the Phoenicians.). They provided expertise and materials for the Temple of Solomon as well as for a trading fleet at Etzion Gever (Eilat).

Government, Blood, and Repentance

Yeshua is Tempted

1 Then, Yeshua was led up into the wilderness, by the Spirit, to be tempted by the adversary;
2 and, fasting forty days and forty nights,—afterwards, he hungered.
3 And, coming near, the tempter said to him,—If thou art God's, Son, speak! that, these stones, may become, loaves.
4 But, he, answering, said, It is written,—Not on bread alone, shall man live, but on every declaration coming forth through the mouth of God.
5 Then, the adversary taketh him with him, unto the holy city,—and he set him upon the pinnacle of the temple;
6 and saith to him—If thou art God's son, cast thyself down,—for it is written, To his messengers, will he give charge concerning thee; and, on hands, will they bear thee up, lest once thou strike, against a stone, thy foot.
7 Yeshua said to him, Again, it is written,—Thou shalt not put to the test, YHWH thy God.
8 Again, the adversary taketh him with him, into an exceeding high mountain,—and pointeth out to him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory;
9 and said to him, All these things, will I give thee,—if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
10 Then saith Yeshua unto him, Withdraw, Satan! for it is written,—YHWH thy God, shalt thou worship, and, to him alone, render divine service.
11 Then, the adversary leaveth him,—and lo! messengers came near, and began ministering unto him.
12 And, hearing that, Yahḥanan, had been arrested, he retired into the Galil.

Teaching and Notes

Parallels: Mk 1.12, 13 // Lu 4.1-13. [1-4 Q1]

Notes:
'satan'; Jb 1 & 2; 1Ch 21.1; Ps 109.6; Zk 3.1, 2. (here, Gr = *diabolou*; *peirazon*)

"Devils"

This passage is included because although it is a fantastic tale, which could be taken to express a dualistic worldview, it is more likely not the point. In the *Tanak*, a messenger has been depicted who "accuses" mankind of disloyalty of faith, yet is not a being like the Greek god Hades or an arch demon, and certainly not a god vying for worship. One finds these dark beings as a result from foreign, pagan influence on popular religion among some Jews. The heightened imagination concerning both demons and angels, are post-exilic results of Eastern sojourns. This is not meant to be a denial of popular Hebrew beliefs concerning fears of uninhabited places, the night, misfortune, the unknown, and how they came to be personified in the Ancient Near East. But such beliefs are not fleshed out or encouraged by scripture into a full scale demonology or angelology.

Ebionites are known to take two approaches concerning a "Devil." The first is to reject the belief in a "Devil" entirely. Alternately, those who maintain that a competitor to God does exist are in danger of committing idolatry by attending their minds to a "god" other than God. The same thing is true of someone idolizing Yeshua. According to our Torah,

representations of things for worship whether it be Yahweh, or another "god," or a deified man is clearly condemned (Ex 20.4-5, *et alia*). Yahweh is without form that can be imitated. In addition, we are not to invoke names of other beings worshipped as divine; in other words, they must not be acknowledged as divine or as ruling in the stead of Yahweh.

Some Christians held that Jesus was not really human, and perhaps was something like a phantom just appearing in human form. It seems you can find any number of configurations in order to make Jesus divine or the diety. Appeals are made to heavenly messengers with human appearance, such as those who visited Avraham. One is addressed as "adonay." Because of a prior verse, some would say God appeared to Avraham.

> 18.1 And Yahweh appeared unto him among the oaks of Mamre,—as, he, was sitting at the opening of the tent in the heat of the day.
> 2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo! three men, standing over against him,—so he looked and ran to meet them from the opening of the tent, and bowed himself to the earth; 3 and said,—O My Lord! [*'adonay*] if, I pray thee, I have found favour in thine eyes, do not I pray thee pass on from thy servant. –Genesis

Later, after then visitors get up to leave…

> 22 And the men turned from thence, and went their way, towards Sodom,—but, Yahweh was yet standing before Abraham.

We have a problem here. Is Yahweh *appearing*, then *eating* lunch with Avraham and then *standing* next to him? The first and last instances state Yahweh as appearing and then standing. And for Christians, it gets more confusing.

> Joh 1:18 God no one hath ever seen; the only begotten Son, who is on the bosom of the Father—he did declare. (Young)
> 1Jo 4:12 Upon God, hath no one, at any time, gazed. (Rotherham)

Earthly Government

Yeshua answers an invitation to spar scripturally with Satan. It is set in admirable ways often missed by Christians. First, the tempter poses situations in which he wants Yeshua to edify himself; yet, Yeshua does not do this but instead centers on Yahweh alone. This should clarify the situation to anyone who would do homage to Yeshua when Yeshua himself directs us to Yahweh instead.

Next "Satan" is assumed to have power over earthly kingdoms (not the planet itself). From the Temple Yeshua can see all the surrounding gentile nations which are apparently seen to be under the influence of evil. If Yeshua will bow down to serve the power that drives these nations, he will be given rule over them.

Yeshua does two things of great interest. The Davidic Messiah is to rule over the gentiles and Israel will no longer be victimized but acknowledged by all as the servant of Yahweh (Is 53 ff.), and so Yeshua, if he were truly the Davidic Messiah, could have said, 'These are already mine and my due!' He does not. Instead he declares his devotion to the God of Israel as all good Jews do to this day. Later, Yeshua will clearly express his disinterest with being the ruler and earthly government overall. He wants only the reign of Yahweh upon the earth. These notices escape the pen of the Christian redactors. (Mt 16.26; 26.53; 22.21)

On the other hand, the Christian Church set its sights precisely on the world and its governments, engaging in struggle to control mankind with their particular and sectarian view. The Church melded with the Roman Empire. Christians equate governments as extensions of God's government on earth, support human leaders as having divine rights, and make others instruments of its will (Rom 13.1-7). What correlation can be made between the lesson of this passage and the history of Christianity? The *Church*, it could be argued, *accepted* Satan's offer.

In our society children are socialized, no, programmed to accept blindly without hesitation the authority of anyone put above them. Perhaps this is why we must deprogram children just enough to resist adult strangers who would kidnap or molest them. Most teachers' training today emphasizes what is called "classroom management" well over the expertise required in the subjects they intend to teach. From the beginning children are taught to obey the teacher, the agent of the society at large, a Christian pagan society, more than obeying their own parents. In fact, most teachers see the parents as a hindrance to the "proper" training and development of the child. We grow up with a succession of authorities, being programmed to know "our betters" and succumb to them as the rightful agents of society, if not surrogates for God Himself. We are pressured and censured by the more socially enthusiastic members ready to use any number of psychological, socio-economic, and perceived spiritual pressures on dissidents and heretics. According to such thought, to resist these agents invites anarchy and the breakdown of civilization. Strangely enough, this is the Roman attitude to the antisocial Christian "atheists" it found in its society (Wilken: 1984, pp. 48-67).

The problem is not an orderly society or even an imperfect one. But *who* are these authorities and what is the *basis* of their right to herd the rest of us? Are they not proponents of pagan Christianity and other non-Yahwistic interests? Instead of following Yeshua's example, they impose and seek rule over the whole world.

The Ebionites hold that all rights and benefits are inalienable and given only by God. Humans can well align themselves to these ideas to the benefit of all. But no earthly government or leader represents God as his viceroy. We reject the liar Paul of Tarsus. We owe no allegiance to earthly authorities. Our allegiance is to Yahweh above all else. To those who would pass off their rule as God's, we offer the words of Yeshua: "Get out of my way, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship Yahweh your 'Elohim, and him only must you serve!'"

It would be a mistake to assume that although this is a book concerning Yeshua that we idolize him or pay homage to him or follow him anywhere the Torah does not allow. Ebionites serve only the God of Israel, and that God is not a man, whether it is "Jesus," a king, a president, or government.

Mosheh, Yeshua, and Yisra'el

Dt 8.1

1 All the commandment which I am commanding thee to-day, shalt thou, observe, to do,—that ye may, live, and multiply, and enter in and possess the land, which Yahweh sware unto your fathers. 2 So then, thou shalt remember all the way in which Yahweh thy God caused thee to **journey these forty years in the desert**,—that he might humble time to put thee to the proof to know what was in thy heart,—whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or not. 3 So **he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger**, and fed thee with **manna** which thou hadst not known, neither had thy fathers' known,—that he might lead thee to consider that not on bread alone, shall **the son of earth** live, but on whatsoever cometh from the bidding of Yahweh, shall the son of earth live.
4 Thy mantle, hath not fallen with age from off thee, and, thy foot, hath not become swollen,—these forty years.

5 Thou must consider, then with thy heart,—that as a man chasteneth his son, Yahweh thy God, hath been chastening thee.

6.13 Yahweh thy God, shalt thou revere And him, shalt thou serve,—And by his name, shalt thou swear.
Ye shall not go after other gods,—of the gods of the peoples who are surrounding you;1

for a jealous GOD, is Yahweh thy God in thy midst,—lest the anger of Yahweh thy God kindle upon thee, and so he destroy thee from off the face of the ground.

16 Ye shall not put Yahweh your God to the proof,—as ye put him to the proof in Massah *that is, "The place of proving"*.

1 Then, Yeshua was led up **into the wilderness**, by the Spirit, to be tempted by the adversary;
and**, fasting forty days and forty nights**,—afterwards, he **hungered.**

3 And, coming near, the tempter said to him,—If thou art God's, **son**, speak! that, these stones, may become, **loaves**.

4 But, he, answering, said, It is written,—Not on bread alone, shall man live, but on every declaration coming forth through the mouth of God.
5 Then, the adversary taketh him with him, unto the holy city,—and he set him upon the pinnacle of the temple;
6 and saith to him—If thou art God's Son, cast thyself down,—for it is written, To his messengers, will he give charge concerning thee; and, on hands, will they bear thee up, lest once thou strike, against a stone, thy foot.
7 Yeshua said to him, Again, it is written,—Thou shalt not put to the test, YHWH thy God.
8 Again, the adversary taketh him with him, into an exceeding high mountain,—and pointeth out to him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory;
9 and said to him, All these things, will I give thee,—if thou wilt fall down and worship me.
10 Then saith Yeshua unto him, Withdraw, Satan! for it is written,—YHWH thy God, shalt thou worship, and, to him alone, render divine service.

Nu 27.12-14; *et alia*

12 And Yahweh said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.
13 And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered.

There are allusions in the story of Yeshua's temptation to Yisra'el's wandering in the wilderness during the exodus from Egypt. Any Jew of the time would have noticed this.

The parallel could indicate a fabrication or reinterpretation and expansion by Christians to make Yeshua appear as another lawgiver than God. Mosheh was bound up with the people of Israel, and like them of the generation in the wilderness he was tested and denied entry into the Land in spite of his own ability to live by the commandments as if he had already entered it. Mosheh was also bound up in the failures of his generation to succeed in embracing the vision of the Promised Land, and rather than seeing his people enter, we was gathered to his people in death.

Yeshua is not the new "lawgiver" as Mosheh, and in fact Mosheh is not the lawgiver—Yahweh is. Yet like Mosheh, Yeshua is also was bound up with Israel as an example of a son of Israel, reflecting Israel itself. Rather than entering the land, Yeshua wanted to bring his people into the Reign, and lived as if he had already entered it. (Yeshua had looked beyond the façade of human systems to the Reign as the reality always present with Yahweh as Ruler.) And he too was bound up in the failure of people of his time to repent and see his vision of the Reign only from afar, ultimately to see his own failure and to be gathered unto his people in death like Mosheh and other prophets.

One astonishing difference in the parallel passages shows a replacement of Yahweh as the One disciplining and tempting Israel. Here it is the character Satan who acts as the antagonist in the gospel. Satan is presented of the god of this (physical?) world. But Yahweh is the King of the Universe, Ruler of everything, whether of matter or otherwise. Why is such a dualistic cosmos with a lesser being in control of the world of matter in the Christian writings? Is it not an admission of Gnostic influence among Christians and some Jews?

Yeshua's Reform Teaching

a. Repent

Mtatt. 4:17 From that time, began Yeshua to be making proclamation, and saying,—Repent ye, for the Reign of the heavens hath drawn near.

Teaching and Notes

Parallels: Mk 1.15

Notes:

Reign of Yahweh imminent –'engidzo (*εγγιζω*) from engoos (*εγγυς*) emphasizing something not ready to happen, but certainty of it's coming to be. It is on the verge whenever the people caught in apparent reality are ready to repent.

When and where is the "kingdom" of God? Some say it is within us (meaning within the Christian church or body of adherents), and others point to a future event brought about by a "second coming." The second coming event in the "end times" (*eschatology* is the study of last things) is looked to as a time of upheaval such as never experienced by humankind, in an apocalypse.

The Greek word behind *apocalypse* means hidden, the hidden is revealed. It was there all along but only a certain consciousness allows one to look beyond the illusion thrown up by powers other than God as a façade. Just as man has free will, and there are two paths to choose from, that of Yahweh or another, there is the real understanding of existence and another. Prophets are able to see beyond the smoke and mirrors. The world of façade is spoken of with symbolic speech and fantastic (often beastial) imagery because, after all, the prophet describes an unreal savage world contrary to the reality of God.

Modern people understand time in a different way from ancient Jews. It is not linear, a succession of cause and effects progressing to a future, but bifurcated. Time has two branches of events, one apparent, one hidden, in parallel, but both part of a process beginning in the present. In other words, the events we typically look toward in a future are actually in process now and long before (Howard-Brook: 2002: 120ff.).

The Reign is there, and we can choose to disengage ourselves from the apparent time ruled by others and choose rule by God and His government now. When everyone heeds this, the Reign becomes no longer hidden (potential) but instead apparent to all mankind; other rulers become non-existent and their injustice ends.

When Yeshua says the Reign is imminent, he says it is here now existing in parallel to events ruled over by Rome and "the world" and injustice. It is a potential alternative for anyone who will look beyond. An acknowledgement on the part of his fellow Jews will be the catalyst that culminates an ongoing process that brings the Reign to the entire world, pushing oppressive existence beneath it. Yeshua was describing an acceptance that Jews call for today through living in accordance with the framework of God's version of existence, the Torah. They call it "bringing the Messiah." Yeshua was not the Messiah, but instead describing how to "bring the Messiah." He was more direct in calling for "bringing the Reign of God," which is the real prize. The Messiah's only importance is his association with that Reign.

We have the choice of living under the rule of God or another now, and become part of the process of bringing the Reign. This process is no different than *tiqqun `olam*, or repairing the world as partners in a process with God. The reason our world is in constant struggle and impending chaos is because we have bowed to other authorities than God, authorities like government, religious charlatans from the Vatican to local preachers, and economic powers from the local usurers to insurance industry.

Repentence

Repentence is the remedy for sin.

Others point to the sacrificial system and blood for the "remission of sins." This is an erroneous theology. Prophets belittle the importance of sacrifice and blood in many places, and the Temple (*miqdash*) itself is claimed to be of little importance, and that Yahweh wants obedience rather than sacrifice. (Nevertheless, the Temple will be rebuilt and sacrifice resumed.)

> 2 Stand thou in the gate of the house of Yahweh, and thou shalt proclaim there this word,—and shalt say—Hear ye the word of Yahweh all Judah ye who are entering in at these gates, to bow down unto Yahweh:
> 3 Thus, saith Yahweh of hosts God of Israel, Amend your ways, and your doings,—That I may cause you to dwell in this place.
> 4 Do not, on your part trust in false words, saying,—The temple of Yahweh The temple of Yahweh, The temple of Yahweh they are!
> 5 But, if ye shall thoroughly amend, your ways, and your doings,—Shall thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbour;
> 6 The sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, shall not oppress, And innocent blood, shall not shed in this place,—And after other gods, shall not walk to your own hurt,
> 7 Then will I cause you to dwell In this place, In the land which I gave to your fathers,—From one age even unto another,
> 8 Lo! ye, on your part, are trusting in false words,—To no profit!
> 9 Are ye to steal, commit murder and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal,—and walk after other gods whom ye have not known;

10 And will ye then come in and stand before me in this house whereon my Name hath been called, and say,—We have set ourselves free,—for the purpose of committing all these abominations?

…

21 Thus, saith Yahweh of hosts God of Israel,—Your ascending-offerings, add ye unto your peace-offerings and eat ye flesh.
22 For I bade not your fathers Neither commanded I them, In the day I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt,—Concerning the matter of ascending-offering and peace-offering;
23 But, this thing, I commanded them—saying, Hearken ye unto my voice, So will I become unto you—a God, And, ye, shall become unto me—a people,—Ye shall therefore walk in all the way that I may command you, To the end it may be well with you.

-Yirmeyah 7

Yeshua will recall these very passages from the prophet Yirmeyah when he attacks those in the Temple using it for commercial gain. (Also see Mi 6.6-8.) Here we see in Yirmeyah's words that one should not rely on the Temple and sacrifice as a way to remedy our relationship with God. The problem is not the nature of the sacrifice, for example, a man being a superior sacrifice to a goat. "Works" of Torah justice are stated to be better than any sacrifice, and the Temple is meaningless compared to them.

The sacrificial system did not cover intentional sin but only sin made in error, that is, *unintentional sin* (Leviticus 4 & 5, emphasis mine). Restitution, responsibility, sinning by mistake and unknowingly, accepting one's guilt are the themes concerning sin:

1 And Yahweh spake, unto Moses, saying:
2 Speak thou unto the sons of Israel, saying—When any person, *shall sin by mistake*, departing from any of the commandments of Yahweh, as to things which should not be done, and shall do any one of them,—
3 If, the anointed priest, shall sin, so as to bring guilt upon the people, then shall he bring near for his sin which he hath committed a choice young bullock without defect, unto Yahweh as a sin-bearer.
4 And he shall bring in the bullock unto the entrance of the tent of meeting, before Yahweh,—and shall lean his hand upon the head of the bullock, and shall slay the bullock before Yahweh.
5 And the anointed priest shall take of the blood of the bullock,—and bring it into the tent of meeting;
6 and the priest shall dip his finger in the blood,—and sprinkle of the blood seven times, before Yahweh, in front of the veil of the sanctuary.
7 Then shall the priest put of the blood upon the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before Yahweh, which is in the tent of meeting,—and, all the [*remainder of the*] blood of the bullock, shall he pour out at the base of the altar of ascending-sacrifice, which is at the entrance of the tent of meeting,
8 And all the fat of the sin-bearing bullock, shall he heave up therefrom,—the fat that covereth over the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards;
9 and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them which is upon the loins,—and as for the caul upon the liver, upon the kidneys, shall he remove it:
10 just as it is heaved up from the ox of the peace-offering,—and the priest shall make of them a perfume on the altar of ascending-sacrifice,
11 But, as for the skin of the bullock and all its flesh with its head and with its legs,—and its inwards, and its dung,
12 he shall take forth the entire bullock—unto the outside of the camp, unto a clean place unto the outpoured heap of fat-ashes, and shall burn it up on wood in the fire,—upon the outpoured heap of fat-ashes, shall it be burned up.
13 And, if the whole assembly of Israel, *shall make a mistake*, and a matter be hidden from the eyes of the convocation,—and so they do something, whereby they depart from any of the commandments of Yahweh as to things which should not be done, *and become guilty*;
14 and the sin shall become known, which they have committed therein, then shall the convocation bring near a choice young bullock as a sin-bearer, yea they shall bring it in. before the tent of meeting;
15 and the elders of the assembly shall lean their hands upon the head of the bullock before Yahweh,—and shall slay the bullock, before Yahweh;

. . . .

22 When a prince, shall sin,—and shall do something, departing from any of the commandments of Yahweh his God as to things which should not be done, *by mistake and shall become aware of his guilt*;
23 or his *sin wherein he hath sinned be made known unto him*, then shall he bring in as his oblation a he-goat a male without defect;

. . . .
27 And, if, any person, *shall sin, by mistake* from among the people of the land,—by his doing anything departing from any of the commandments of Yahweh, as to things which should not be done, and shall *become aware of his guilt*;
28 or his *sin which he hath committed shall be made known unto, him*, then shall he bring in, as his oblation, a kid of the goats a female, without defect, for his sin which he hath committed;
. . . .
5.1 Any person, moreover, whensoever he shall sin in that, when he heareth a voice of swearing, he himself, being a witness either seeing or knowing,—if he do not tell and so hath to bear his iniquity:—
2 Or, any person, who toucheth anything unclean, whether the carcass of an unclean wild-beast or the carcass of an unclean tame-beast, or the carcass of an unclean creeping thing,—and it is hidden from him, he himself being unclean, and he *becometh aware of his guilt*:—
3 Or whensoever one shall touch the uncleanness of man, as regardeth any uncleanness of his, wherewith one may become unclean,—and it *be hidden from him, and then he himself, getting to know it becometh aware of his guilt*:—
4 Or, any person, whensoever he shall swear, speaking unadvisedly with the lips, to harm or to help, as regardeth anything wherein the son of earth may speak unadvisedly by way of oath, and it be *hidden from him*,—and then, he himself, getting to know it, *becometh aware of his guilt* as regardeth any one of these things.
5 Then shall it be, when he *becometh aware of his guilt*, as regardeth any one of these things, that he *shall confess* that wherein he hath sinned;
6 and shall bring in as his guilt-bearer unto Yahweh for his sin which he hath committed, a female from the flock—a lamb or a kid of the goats—as a sin-bearer,—so shall the priest put propitiatory-covering over him, because of his sin.

7 And, if his hand cannot reach sufficient for a lamb, then shall he bring in to bear his guilt—for that he hath sinned—two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons unto Yahweh,—one for a sin-bearer, and one for an ascending-sacrifice.
8 And he shall take them in unto the priest, who shall bring near that which is for a sin-bearer first,—and shall nip through the neck close to the head but shall not divide it asunder.
9 And he shall sprinkle of the blood of the sin-bearer upon the wall of the altar, and the remainder of the blood, shall he drain out at the base of the altar,—a, sin-bearer, it is.
10 And of the second, shall he make an ascending-sacrifice according to the regulation,—so shall the priest put a propitiatory-covering over him, because of his sin which he hath committed and it shall be forgiven him.

11 But if his hand cannot lay hold of two turtledove, or two young pigeons, then shall he bring in as his oblation—because he hath sinned—the *tenth of an ephah of fine meal for bearing sin*,—he shall not put thereon oil, neither shall he lay thereon frankincense, for a sin-bearer, it is.
12 And he shall bring it in unto the priest, and the priest shall take therefrom a handful, as the memorial thereof, and shall make a perfume at the altar, upon the altar-flames of Yahweh,—a sin-bearer, it is.
13 So shall the priest put a propitiatory-covering over him, on account of his sin which he hath committed, departing from some one of these things, and it shall be forgiven him,—then shall it be the priest's, like the meal-offering.
. . . .
17 And if any person when he shall sin, and do something, departing from any of the commandments of Yahweh, as to things which should not be done,—though he knew it not, shall so become guilty, and *shall bear his iniquity*,
18 then shall he bring in a ram without defect out of the flock by thine estimate as a guilt-bearer unto the priest,—and the priest shall put a propitiatory-covering over him, on account of his *mistake* which he made *though he knew it not* and it shall be forgiven him:
19 a guilt-bearer, it is,—he was, verily guilty against Yahweh.

1 And Yahweh spake unto Moses, saying—
2 When any person, shall sin, and shall commit a trespass against Yahweh,—and shall withhold something of the truth from his neighbour in respect of a deposit, or a pledge or anything plundered, or shall use extortion with his neighbour;
3 or shall find something lost and shall withhold something of the truth therein, and shall swear to a falsehood,—as regardeth a single thing of all that a son of earth may do, to commit sin thereby;
4 and so it shall come about that he shall commit sin and then become aware of his guilt, then shall he return the plunder which he had plundered, or the extortion which he had extorted, or the deposit that was deposited with him,—or the lost thing which he hath found:
5 or in anything as to which he hath been swearing to a falsehood, then shall he make it good in the principal thereof, and the fifth part thereof, shall he add thereunto,—to whomsoever it belongeth, to him, shall he give it in the day he becometh aware of his guilt;

6 but, his guilt-bearer, itself, shall he bring in unto Yahweh,—a ram without defect out of the flock by thine estimate as a guilt-bearer, unto the priest.
7 So shall the priest put a propitiatory-covering over him before Yahweh, and it shall be forgiven him,—on account of any one thing, of all which one might do, so as to become guilty therein. [Emphasis mine.]

In the above passages the redundant ritual of the priests has been omitted after the first mention. Important points are that the transgressor in most cases is at first unaware of his sin; then once aware feels remorse and guilt; in some cases the sin is confessed; but a sacrifice is made, the sacrifice varying according to the sinner. The sacrifice for an Israelite in contrast to the leader of the people or a priest, can be a *female* goat, turtle doves, or a small amount of flour as the offender is able to afford. The deliberate sinner must still "bear his iniquity," remedy the transgression, usually making restitution, *and then* offer sacrifice.

Christians tell us, speaking of Jesus as a blood sacrifice, that:

… This *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and **without shedding of blood there is no remission** [*of sin*].

–Hebrews 9.20-22

In the Christian Writing *Hebrews* the meaning and context of the Torah is purposely misrepresented because we read in *Wayyiqra'* (Leviticus) 17 that the context is the prohibition is against partaking of blood. Notice the difference in the Christian passage above and that italicized below.

10 And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that eateth any manner of blood, I will set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.
11 *For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls;* ***for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life.***
12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel: No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.
13 And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among them, that taketh in hunting any beast or fowl that may be eaten, he shall pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.
14 For as to the life of all flesh, the blood thereof is all one with the life thereof; therefore I said unto the children of Israel: Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh; for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof; whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.
15 And every soul that eateth that which dieth of itself, or that which is torn of beasts, whether he be home-born or a stranger, he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even; then shall he be clean.
16 But if he wash them not, nor bathe his flesh, then he shall bear his iniquity. [Emphasis mine.]

In fact, very few things are purged by blood, and this does not even include deliberate sins. What is required to remove the sin of eating blood, which defiles a person for worship in the sanctuary of Yahweh? Ingesting more blood? Spiritually imbibing upon the blood of a man? The Christian Writings tell us Jesus said about a cup of wine to be drunk, "For, this, is my blood of the covenant, which, for many, is to be poured out, for remission of sins" (Mt 26.28; Cf., Mk 14.24; Lu 22.20). This flies in the face of anything biblically proper, holy, or clean.

In addition, sacrificial blood is not the sign of a covenant. Sacrifices *accompany* covenants (Gn 8.20; 15.9; 21.27). The only blood of a man physically signifying a covenant is the blood of circumcision (Gn 17). Not even we would not compare the cup of Jesus drank by Christians to blood from a bleeding foreskin.

In one instance (not an eternal commandment concerning covenant like circumcision), we have Israelites being splattered with blood to conclude a promise they make to God to obey His commandments. This is an interesting instance that was the basis of one of my first hostile confrontation with a Christian. A cousin had come to our home for a family event and I

overheard the conversation (they call it "witnessing") in the next room of our small house. My wife was being told that "Jesus' blood was all she needed" and not animal blood "slung all over her" like the Jews did. I intervened and asked where she got such a crazy notion. She started convulsing and spouting out, "Jesus! Jesus!" in a type of Pentecostal frenzy as I began to get my Bible so she could show me. So I then saw her to the door, and locked it behind her.

The incident is recorded in Exodus at the beginning of the 24th chapter, but reading in context, it is an end of an account in which the Israelites are offered Yahweh's commandments that begins in chapter 19.

> 3 And when Moses, had gone up unto God, then called Yahweh unto him out of the mountain saying, Thus, shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, And tell the sons of Israel: 4 Ye, have seen what I did unto the Egyptians,—And how I bare you upon wings of eagles, And brought you in unto myself:—5 Now, therefore, if ye will, indeed hearken, to my voice, And keep my covenant, Then shall ye be mine as a treasure beyond all the peoples, For, mine, is all the earth; 6 But, ye, shall be mine, As a kingdom of priests, And a holy nation. These, are the words, which thou shalt speak unto the sons of Israel.
> 7 Then came Moses, and called for the elders of the people,—and put before them all these words which Yahweh had commanded him. 8 And all the people responded together and said, All that Yahweh hath spoken, will we do. And Moses took back the words of the people, unto Yahweh. 9 Then said Yahweh unto Moses: Lo! I, am coming unto thee in the veiling of cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with thee, moreover also, that, in thee, they may trust to times age-abiding. Then told Moses the words of the people unto Yahweh.

Here the covenant of God's Torah is announced through the elders, which they agree to even without hearing it. Moses will receive God's holy commandments and take it to the people. The people of Israel are to be a nation of priests of God among other peoples of the world by keeping this covenant agreement expressed by God's Torah commandments. After the commandments are given, Israel will once again agree and a ceremony solemnifying the event is performed.

> 24.3 So Moses came, and recounted to the people all the words of Yahweh, and all the regulations, and all the people responded with one voice and said, All the words which Yahweh hath spoken, will we do. 4 Then wrote Moses all the words of Yahweh, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar, below the mountain, and twelve pillars, for the twelve tribes of Israel: 5 and he sent young men of the sons of Israel, and they caused to go up, ascending-sacrifices,—and slew peace-offerings to Yahweh, of oxen. 6 Then took Moses half of the blood, and put it in basins, and half of the blood, dashed he over the altar: 7 then took he the book of the covenant, and read in the ears of the people. And they said, All that Yahweh hath spoken, will we do, and will hearken,
> 8 Then Moses took the blood, and dashed over the people, and said, Lo! the blood of the covenant which Yahweh hath solemnised with you, over all these words.

Why does Mosheh have blood on standing stones representing the tribes of Israel, and then the other half on the people themselves? The blood certainly did not "save" them; it marked what they had already accepted, the Torah commandments, and to live in them. It has to do with the fact that Israel was to act as a "kingdom of priests" and the ceremony imitated how the levitical priests and the stone altar were "anointed" with blood (Ex. 29.21; Le 8.30). Israel is the appointed messenger of God's purpose to the world expressed through His commandments, acting collectively as priests by keeping those commandments, while the levitical priests served as religious guardians to Israelites. The priests were also anointed with oil and only they approached in service at God's sanctuary, which illustrates the hierarchy just noted.

Contact with blood normally renders a person, other than a priest in the precincts, unclean—that is ritually unfit to approach the sanctuary of God. To relieve this situation a bath (that is, an immersion) is required. Blood spilt signifies death whether it is that of a sacrificial animal, a dead corpse, or menstruating women (just as "lost" semen does). And this is why we have mentions of life being in the blood—that is, life as it is still contained in the man or animal—not after it has been spilled. The priests acted as middlemen in contracting impurity coming in contact with blood and death from sacrificial animals in the holy precincts.

Yahweh and life are bound in biblical thinking. The separation from blood, and thus life as well, indicated death, and therefore a separation from Yahweh. Sin leads to death. When a man became aware of his sin he acknowledged that sin would ultimately separate him from life. Giving a sacrifice and seeing it killed showed that he understood what separation due to sin could bring to him. Sin brings slaughter and death. Sacrifice played this object lesson out before Israelites.

Men were not covered with blood in order to cleanse from sin. They did not drink blood either. Blood was splattered on things, in the sacred precincts, not on people. The priests perhaps may have become bloodstained in their work, and they also placed a dab of blood on their right ear lobe, thumb, and large toe. A leper also received this application of blood as well as oil on the same parts after being cured.

Within the sacred precincts, which were fantastically beautiful with sacred architecture and furnishings, there were also areas of slaughter made horrid with death and blood. The world itself is fantastic beyond words and full of God's beautiful handiwork. Yet in the midst of it we see sin, blood spilt and death. The Tabernacle and the Temple were places for remedial lessons.

We have heard Yeshua called a "sin-bearer" whose blood covers the sins of those who believe in the Christian claims. The sacrificial system is pointed to as the precedent for this human sacrifice. We have covered and refuted these claims except one concerning the specific instance of the Yom Kippurim (Day of Purgation) ritual (Lev. 16ff.). In this ritual observed in the precincts of the Mishkan and later Bet Ha- Miqdash (Temple), the High Priest performed an exiapatory sacrifice for himself and the other Levites and all the sins of Israel.

2 And Yahweh said unto Moses—Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he do not come at all times into the holy place, within the veil,—into the presence of the propitiatory, which is upon the ark, so shall he not die, for, in the cloud, will I appear upon the propitiatory. 3 Herewith, shall Aaron come into the holy place,—With a bullock the choice of the herd as a sin-bearer, and a ram as an ascending-sacrifice. 4 A holy tunic of linen, shall he put on and drawers of linen, shall be upon his flesh, and with a band of linen, shall he gird himself, and with a turban of linen, shall his head be wrapped about,—holy garments, they are, therefore shall he bathe in water his flesh, and so put them on. 5 And, from the assembly of the sons of Israel, shall he receive two he-goats, for bearing sin,—and one ram, as an ascending-sacrifice. 6 Then shall Aaron bring near the sin-bearing bullock which is for himself,—and put a propitiatory-covering about himself, and about his household. 7 Then shall he take the two goats,—and cause them to stand before Yahweh, at the entrance of the tent of meeting. 8 And Aaron shall cast lots over the two goats,—one lot for Yahweh, and one lot for Azazel. 9 Then shall Aaron bring near the goat over which came up the lot for Yahweh,—and shall make of hint a sin-bearer; 10 but, the goat over which came up the lot for Azazel, shall he cause to stand alive—before Yahweh to put a propitiatory-covering over him,—to send him away unto Azazel, towards the desert. 11 So Aaron shall bring near the sin-bearing bullock which is for himself, and shall put a propitiatory-covering about himself, and about his household,—and shall slay the sin-bearing bullock which is for himself; 12 and shall take the censer-full of burning coals of fire from off the altar from before Yahweh, and his hands full of fragrant incense, beaten small,—and bring within the veil; 13 and shall put the incense upon the fire before Yahweh,—and the cloud of incense shall cover the propitiatory which is over the testimony, and he shall not die. 14 Then shall he take of the blood of the bullock, and shall sprinkle with iris finger upon the face of the propitiatory, eastwards,—and before the propitiatory, shall he sprinkle seven times, of the blood, with his finger.

15 Then shall he slay the sin-bearing goat which is for the people, and bring in its blood, within the veil,—and do with its blood, as he did to the blood of the bullock, and shall sprinkle it, upon the propitiatory and before the propitiatory: 16 so shall he put a propitiatory-covering, over the holy place because of the uncleanness of the sons of Israel, and because of their transgressions to the extent of all their sins,—and, so, shall he do for the tent of meeting which abideth with them, in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 And no human being, shall be in the tent of meeting, when he cometh in to make a covering by propitiation in the holy place, until he goeth out,—so shall he put a propitiatory-covering about himself and about his household and about all the convocation of Israel. 18 Then shall he go out unto the altar which is before Yahweh and shall put a propitiatory-covering thereupon,—and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put upon the horns of the altar, round about;
19 and shall sprinkle upon it, of the blood with his finger seven times,—and shall cleanse it and hallow it, from the uncleannesses of the sons of Israel.

20 And, when he hath made an end of covering by propitiation the holy place, and the tent of meeting, and the altar, then shall he bring near the living goat. 21 And Aaron shall lean his two hands upon the head of the living goat, and confess over him, all the iniquities of the sons of Israel, and all their transgressions, to the extent of all their sins,—and shall put them upon the head of the goat, and then send him away, by the hand of a man appointed towards the desert: 22 so shall the goat hear upon him all their iniquities into a lone land,—and he shall set the goat free, in the desert. 23 Then shall Aaron come into the tent of meeting, and put off the linen garments which he put on when he came into the holy place,—and shall leave them there; 24 and shall bathe his flesh in water in a holy place, and put on his *other* garments,—and go forth, and offer his own ascending-sacrifice, and the ascending-sacrifice of the people, so shall he put a propitiatory-covering about himself, and about the people; 25 and, with the fat of the sin-

bearer, shall he make a perfume at the altar. 26 And he that sent away the goat unto Azazel, shall wash—his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water—and, after that, shall he come into the camp. 27 And the, sin-bearing bullock, and the sin-bearing goat whose blood was brought in to make a propitiatory-covering in the holy place, shall be carried forth outside the camp—and they shall burn up, in fire, their skins and their flesh, and their dung; 28 and he that hath burned them, shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water,—and, after that, shall he come into the camp. (Rotherham)

Notice the following: Blood acts as a "detergent" to cleanse the sacred precincts, including the "mercy-seat" (Rotherham calls it the *propitiatory*) in the Holy of Holies. In other words, blood cleanses, or "covers," things, not people. The goal was to not allow defilement to enter the precincts. The priest must do this, as Israel in their possible defilement cannot enter the precincts at this time. Yet the defilement caused by their sins in the land is seen to be able to encroach on the holy of holies itself, and it must be rememdied as well. It is by the priest with blood acting as detergent.

The high priest is also defiled and therefore offers a sacrifice to obtain blood from the priestly sacrifice to cleanse his and fellow priests' defilement. He confesses sins also because not only must the sacrifice of a bullock and goat act to cleanse Israel and the priests as part of Israel, but also there is a living goat that will carry the confessed sins of the priest and additionally all Israel into the wilderness to Azazel.

So although the high priest alone is deemed fit to observe the ritual, he too is contaminated and in need of confession. His blood was not spilled, and no blood was spilled to cover sins (*'awonot*, wrongdoing, etc.), but just ritual defilement of the precincts. Comparisons are made to Yeshua as both high priest and sacrifice at the same time, and for sins rather than defilement. Such a theology is muddled.

The actual sin-bearer was not the priest, the blood, or sacrifice. Instead it was the living goat (not lamb) sent as an offering to a wilderness demon! No blood, no sacrifice, and not made by the actual high priest, but another man (Milgrom: pp. 1009-1084).

Lastly, the Azazel goat was the sin-bearer for *all* Israel. All Israel were part of a group initiated by circumcision, and consequently striving to live by covenant obligations of God's Torah. It is obvious that this was an ongoing process and sacrifice was not a permanent remedy to defilement of accidental sins, and not at all for deliberate sins. So the question posed and answered in Christian theology is irrelevant. It is claimed that "Christ" was the better, perfect sacrifice for sin that could surpass all others. Even as a substitute for an animal, Yeshua did not possess the required state of “perfection” in any way. He was blemished, for example (even without going into the matter of being sinless). The scourging and mistreatment that Yeshua received before his death rendered unfit (if we compare him to a goat or sheep or cow) as a sacrifice. We offer this comment only as illustration finding the whole subject of blood atonement as taught by Christianity to be preposterous and based on a misunderstanding of sacrifice and sin.

We could push the comparison and point out that Yeshua was not "sacrificed" in the Temple (rightfully, since God informed Avraham that he did not want human sacrifice); he was not bled to have his blood applied to the altar, and certainly not applied to any person; he was not consumed by fire as a whole burnt offering. And which is he, a female or male goat, or a lamb?

The cruel and unfortunate death of Yeshua ben Yosef, a righteous man in Ebionite thought, is made absurd by comparing him with an animal killed as a sacrifice. This is the stuff of pagan religion in which the blood of sacrificial animals were imbibed and used for an immersion.

> According to a wide-spread notion among primitive peoples, the blood is the vehicle of the vital energy, and the person who poured it upon his body and moistened his tongue with it, believed that he was thereby endowed with the courage and strength of the slaughtered animal (Cumont: 1956, p. 180).

Pagan belief often finds expression in the idea that man can partake of the nature of a god or divinity through a sacrament. When primitive man imitated the beast he hunted, or symbolic king of his prey, or ritually ate his prey he was using familiar magic to gain the power or attributes. Activities were employed to "transform" the worshipper into the god or divine beast.

He did this often through ritual consumption. The less human, and more ecstatic the worshipper became, the more enthused, that is, filled with the god, he was thought to be.

When the descendants of Avraham sacrificed to God, they did not imbibe Him to gain part of His nature. In their belief they were sharing a meal with God who provided their every need, and symbolically affirmed this by giving a portion back to Him whether by pouring out the blood of the life force, or burning a portion of meat into ash. This is an act signifying agreement or partnership relationship, not a communion.

While the Christian blood bathing and drinking, receiving power of salvation, and ingesting flesh of a human sacrifice is only figurative, it is from paganism that the imagery is drawn. This was suitable for Paul's pagan converts' understanding. Yet Romans made many accusations based on this loose imagery. Even they were sickened by the thought of eating human flesh as spoken of the bread in Christian communion. The Romans accused early Christian cult (*superstitio*) members of heinous acts that were conducted at secret meetings hidden from the rest of mankind whom they believed Christians hated. Could Christians have actually participated in such things?

Christianity as promulgated among the gentiles existed in many forms that took sacrificial imagery to shocking ritual. The Christian apologist Epiphanius reports the following concerning some fellow Christians known as the Phibionites:

> When they thus ate together and so to speak filled up their veins from the surplus of their strength they turn to excitements. The man leaving his wife says to his wife: "Stand up and perform the agape with the brother." Then the unfortunates unite with each other, and as I am truly ashamed to say the shameful things that are done by them, because according to the holy apostle [*Paul of Tarsus*] the things that are happening by them are shameful even to mention, nevertheless I will not be ashamed to say those things which they are not ashamed to do, in order that I may cause in every way a horror in those who hear about their shameful practices. After they have had intercourse in the passion of their fornication they raise their own blasphemy to heaven. The woman and the man take the fluid of the emission of the man into their hands, they stand, turn toward heaven, their hands besmeared with the uncleanness, and pray as the people called *stratiotikoi* and *gnostikoi*, bringing to the father of nature of all that which they have on their hands, and they say: "We offer to thee this gift, the body of Christ." And then they eat it, their own ugliness, and say: "This is the body of Christ and this is the Passover for the sake of which our bodies suffer and are forced to confess the suffering of Christ." Similarly also with the woman when she happens to be in the flowing of blood they gather the blood of menstruation of her uncleanness and eat it together and say: "This is the blood of Christ." -*Panarion* 26.4-5

Granted, Epiphanius may make exaggerations or garble information in his work.

Additionally they were accused of eating an unborn child for the same purpose (Wilken: 1984, p. 20). As Wilken notes, while not all Christians may have participated or approved of such interpretations of "Christ's flesh" and blood, and expansions to include various products of "sinful" flesh, outsiders to the Christian groups could hardly distinguish which represented the "real" Christians from the "false" Christians. Paul of Tarsus may have had knowledge of some promiscuity and misunderstanding as well, according to 1 Corinthians, chapter 11, during the "love feasts."

Christian writer Minucius Felix reports a practice in which …

> A young baby is covered over with flour, the object being to deceive the unwary. It is then served before the person to be admitted into the rites. The recruit is urged to inflict blows onto it—they appear to be harmless because of the covering of flour. Thus the baby is killed with wounds that remain unseen and concealed. It is the blood of the infant—I shudder to mention it—it is this blood that they lick with thirsty lips; these are the limbs they distribute eagerly; this is the victim by which they seal their covenant….
>
> On a special day they gather in a feast with all their children, sisters, mothers—all sexes and ages. There, flushed with the banquet after such feasting and drinking, they begin to burn with incestuous passions. They provoke a dog tied to a lampstand to leap and bound towards a scrap of food which they have tossed outside the reach of his chain. By this means the light is overturned and extinguished, and with it common knowledge of their actions; in the shameless dark with unspeakable lust they copulate in random unions, all equally being guilty of incest, some by deed, but everyone by complicity….
>
> *–Octavius 9.5-6*

Note that the Romans were not writing these things, but Christians like Clement of Alexandria and Justin Martyr who report similar things (Wilken: 1984, pp. 18-23). It is obvious that these are not normal practices, but the reinterpretation of Christian sacrificial imagery and "love" according to preexisting understanding on the part of gentiles coming into Christian belief. There is obviously no precedent in biblical thought to allow such nonsense.

But we must ask, where is the biblical precedent for Jesus as a sacrifice whose blood we must partake in? Without biblical precedent many things can go wrong and be reinterpreted according to pagan ideas. Is it not obvious that the idea of Jesus as a sacrifice for sins is just such an instance of misunderstanding events in his life and producing a pagan reinterpretation of them?

Jesus' blood as a propitiation (*hilasterion*) for sins such as that in animal blood on the Day of Purgation applied in the sacred precincts is interesting as a purgative cleanser to allow worshippers, in this case Israel, to reenter the precincts held to be a portal or residence of God's presence (Fitzmeyer: 1967, p. 46ff.). But it does not "cover" deliberate sin that needed reparation. In the ritual itself the residue of accumulated sin in Israel had to be carried off to an Azazel (goat demon). Such sins as transgressions against God's Torah in the Land collected to create defilement.

Paul of Tarsus calls the system of Torah a curse, which separated Jews from Greeks and barbarians among other negative things. Where does such an idea come from, posing God as punitive through His Torah as if it were a cruel joke rather than an eternal means of living according to His love for mankind? We are dealing with a system of thought that perverts the world of reality into its opposite. Speaking of Paul's theology, Christian scholar Rudolf Bultmann says:

> …Christ's death is not merely a sacrifice which cancels the guilt of sin (i.e., the punishment contracted by sinning), but is also the *means of release from the powers of this age: Law, Sin, and Death*.
>
> The question then arises how Christ's death can have such an effect. It finds answer in the statements in which *Paul describes Christ's death in analogy with the death of a divinity of the mystery religions*. [Emphasis Bultmann]

He goes on to describe how mystery cult and Gnostic ideas merged and were expanded in Paul's theology (Bultmann: 1951, 1955, p. 297ff.).

Couldn't these pagans, Gnostic, semi-Christians have made the case that blood and semen which marks life and death is similar to "Christ's blood" to free us from unclean existence? In some Gnostic thought this was exactly the belief. Can't love be understood to be sex, and freedom as release from the social conventions of the physical world (the powers of this Age)? Certainly it is because of concerns of existence in a physical world that "laws" such as the Torah disallow sex with children or relations. The Gnostic can ignore such law and do away with it. The laws of God were dispensed away as those of an evil demiurge, so why not engage in whatever one pleased and declare it holy and sacramental? Paul's writings provided the basis for Christian Gnosticism (Pagels: 1992). While we would see such ideas as absurd, they were not to those engaging in them. Likewise, devotees talking about the sacrifice of a man whose death celebrated as a communion of God and man by eating wafers and wine called the "blood and body of Christ" to obtain a mystical salvation is just as absurd.

No Blood is Needed

We must insist in the strongest terms possible that for Yahwistic people consumption of blood is a sign of the most disgusting, sickening savagery, and even to use consumption of blood and human flesh as a symbol in connection with anything biblical or holy is repulsive and horrific. The Christian "communion" (or *Eucharist*) is the outstanding example of religion gone wrong to a Yahwistic person. Yet Christianity, claiming a biblical heritage, has made this the central rite!

The Christian doctrine of transubstantiation says that during the eucharistic worship bread and wine become in substance the actual flesh and blood of Jesus. This is based on the Christian gospels' accounts in Matthew 26.28ff., Luke 22.20ff. and Mark 14.22ff. John 6 reads:

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. 56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

Although Protestant branches of Christianity do not take this so literally, the blood consumption is still very important symbolically, in total disregard of God's prohibition of such foul practices. And in spite of Jewish abhorrence of such practices, concerning sacrifice and the glaring difference in the understandings of sacrifice between Christians and Jews, Christians have imposed their own erroneous and bizarre mythology concerning sacrifice upon Jews for hundreds of years. They imagine a Jewish dependency on blood for salvation, so much so that they have attributed the most preposterous practices to Jews.

The first accusation, referred to as the *blood libel*, is that Jews needed the blood of Christian innocents (since Jews rejected the innocent blood of Christ) in order to mix it with the unleavened bread (*matzah*) used for the Passover feast. So if a Christian child or baby went missing, Jews would be accused of abducting the child for its blood. Riots followed in which the Jews of the vicinity, including Jewish babies, would be massacred. This happened more than once during the Middle Ages. In the case of little Hugh of Lincoln, 19 Jews were executed in 1255 after the nine year old was found dead in a well. His friends accused local Jews of holding him for a month torturing and finally crucifying him. In 1144 also in England Jews were accused of buying a Christian child William from Norwich for similar reasons. And there are many other supposed incidents, including one in the United States at Massena, New York in 1928 when Jews were accused of taking a four-year-old girl for the Day of Atonement, though she turned up the next day!

Since the bread and wine of communion were once held to be the host of the actual blood and body of the Christian god, Jews were also "caught" abusing it in various ways such as stabbing it or otherwise torturing "Christ."

> Defiling the host or sacred wafer of the mass. In the Middle Ages the Jews were frequently accused of desecrating the host, an accusation equal in gravity to that of desecrating relics and images of Jesus and the saints. This accusation has brought thousands of Jews to the stake. The Jews were alleged to steal the host or to acquire it by purchase or bribery, to break it or seethe it, and to stick needles into it or transfix it, whereupon it began to bleed. Even when such an accusation was supported only by the testimony of a thief, a disreputable woman, a recent convert, or some one having a grudge against the accused Jews, the alleged perpetrators were put on trial, and, on evidence that was often preposterous, or after a confession exacted by torture, were condemned and burned, sometimes with all the other Jews of the place. The question, Why did not the Jews destroy the pierced host, the corpus delicti? The chronicles answer by the following statement: The Jews, frightened on seeing the blood, endeavored to hide the host, but while doing so miracles happened which aroused the attention of the Christian population and led to the discovery of the crime. The story is told, for instance, that once when the Jews were burying pieces of a pierced host in a meadow, these pieces were changed into butterflies, which began to heal cripples and blind persons. Another time, when some Jews were burning such pieces in a stove, angels and doves flew out. Again, the pieces fluttered out of a swamp, and a herd of grazing oxen, on seeing them, bowed down before them. The blood from the host was said to have splashed the foreheads of the Jews, leaving an indelible mark that betrayed them. It was also said that the pierced host had once whimpered and cried like an infant; this story is perhaps the earliest. As a rule, the later the chronicles the more stories of this nature they contain.
>
> *-"Host Desecration" Jewish Encylopedia. (http://jewishencyclopedia.com/)*

Such ridiculous charges and savage ignorance are the result of the absurd Christian theology regarding blood and sacrifice costing thousands of innocent Jewish lives.

Is blood sacrifice required for sin? Psalms (*Tehillim*) 40 tells us that Yahweh hears the prayer; He opens His ears to the penitent and does not want or require burnt offerings or sin offerings. In 51, Yahweh is offered praise, a broken spirit and heart because He prefers them to sacrifice. Yahweh forgives and hears His People even in the time when there is no Temple standing or sacrifice offered (1Ki 8.46ff; De 4.26ff; Hos 6.6, 14.2ff.). And not all sacrifices were bloody. He accepted flour, as shown above. There are, literally, too many passages to cite here where Yahweh asks for repentance and obedience to maintain the covenant relationship and salvation.

Even charity (*ṣᵊḏāqāh*, justice, giving support to the poor as a just act) is a means of "salvation" in reconciliation with God. Here are a few examples from Proverbs.

10.2 The treasures of lawlessness, do not profit, but, righteousness (*ṣᵊḏāqāh*), delivereth from death.
11.4 Wealth, shall not profit, in the day of wrath, but, righteousness (*ṣᵊḏāqāh*), shall deliver from death.
21.3 To do righteousness and justice (*ṣᵊḏāqāh*), is more choice to Yahweh than sacrifice.

Prayer can also replace sacrifice.

Ho 14.1 (2) Return, O Israel, unto Yahweh thy God; for thou hast stumbled in thine iniquity. (3) Take with you words, and return unto Yahweh; say unto Him: 'Forgive all iniquity, and accept that which is good; so will we render for bullocks the offering of our lips.

This passage in Hoshe'a mentions the sacrifices of bulls, (*parîm*) in the Hebrew text, being substituted by the offerings of the lips, that is, words of prayer. Strangely enough, Christian translations sometimes misrepresent this verse.

Ho 14.2 Take with you words, and return to Yahweh: say unto him—Wholly, shalt thou take away iniquity, Accept, then, with favour, and **we will make good the boldness** of our lips! (Rotherham; NIV- "…offer the fruit of our lips"; YLT- "render … fruit…")

Why would they do that? Why would they purposely mistranslate this?

But does He ever require a vicarious substitution of one man for another man's sins? Who is responsible for a man's sins?

1 And the word of YHWH came unto me, saying:
2 'What mean ye, that ye use this proverb in the land of Israel, saying: The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?
3 As I live, saith my Lord YHWH, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.
4 Behold, all souls are Mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die. . . . .

19 Yet say ye: Why doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father with him? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all My statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live.
20 The soul that sinneth, it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father with him, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son with him; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

21 But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all My statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.
22 None of his transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him; for his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.
23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith my Lord YHWH; and not rather that he should return from his ways, and live?
24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered; for his trespass that he trespassed, and for his sin that he hath sinned, for them shall he die.
25 Yet ye say: The way of 'Adonay is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel: Is it My way that is not equal? is it not your ways that are unequal?
26 When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall die therefore; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.
27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. *– Ezk 18*

According to Scripture you are not responsible to atone for the sins of another, and Yahweh does not ask this, nor for a man to atone for you. The responsibility of either living in your obedience or dying in your sins lies solely with you. He accepts your observance of Torah justice and forgives your previous sins when you repent. It is a way so simple that even a fool cannot go wrong following this path.

Christianity promotes the idea that Jesus is a sacrifice, and not only this, but a sacrifice that ends all sacrifice, replacing animal sacrifice forever!

NT, Heb 9.12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. 13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: 14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

When the new age, the Messianic era spoken of in the Prophets, really comes, not only will the Christian sacrifice of the man Jesus be ignored as animal sacrifices are resumed, but all who believe in God and have covenant with Him will also offer sacrifices!

Is 56.4 For thus, saith Yahweh—Of the eunuchs, Who shall keep my sabbaths, And choose what I delight in,—And lay firm hold on my covenant, 5 That I will give unto them—In my house, And within my walls, A sign and a name, better than sons and daughters,—A name age-abiding, will I give him, which shall not be cut off. 6 And, as for the sons of the foreigner—Who have joined themselves unto Yahweh To wait upon him, and To love the name of Yahweh, To become his for servants,—Every one who keepeth the sabbath, lest he profane it. And who, layeth firm hold on my covenant, 7 Surely I will bring them into my holy mountain And make them joyful in my house of prayer, Their ascending-offerings and their sacrifices, being accepted upon mine altar,—For, my house, a house of prayer, shall be called, for all the peoples!

The book of Ezekiel (cf. especially 43.22ff) describes the Temple that will be rebuilt extensively. The prospect of a rebuilt Temple fascinates apocalyptic Christian speculators, positively and negatively. But if the prophets are true, they must accept that it will be rebuilt and that it will be a good thing, animals will be sacrificed, and if they have a relationship with God, they will be making some of those sacrifices! If animal sacrifices resume then the sacrificial system cannot be a "foreshadowing" (Hebrews 9), nor can Jesus be a sacrifice to replace them. Instead, former Christians will repent of idolatry and other sins and finally worship the God of Israel (Zechariah 8).

You need no sacrifice today to repent and turn to God. God told the prophet Hoshea that there would be days without a Temple or sacrifice (chap. 3), and we have seen that blood sacrifice is not necessary but instead a repentant, contrite heart is. Justice (charity, righteousness) is. The entire gentile city of ancient Nineveh repented of their sins in sackcloth and ashes, fasting, turning from their evil ways, without sacrifice, and God turned the wrath they had rightfully earned away from them. In fact, it is repentance that God is interested in whether there is a Temple and sacrifice or not, and he will freely pardon the sinner.

5 Lo! A nation thou shalt not know, shalt thou call, And, a nation which hath not known thee, unto thee, shall run,—For the sake of Yahweh thy God, And for the Holy One of Israel, because he hath adorned thee.
6 Seek Yahweh while he may be found,—Call ye upon him while he is near:
7 Let the lawless forsake his way, And the man of iniquity, his thoughts,—And let him return unto Yahweh That he may have compassion upon him, And unto our God, For he will abundantly pardon.
8 For, my thoughts, are not, your thoughts, Nor, your ways, my ways,—Declareth Yahweh.
9 For, higher, are the heavens than the earth,—So, higher, are My ways than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

The Christian doctrine of atonement is a gross misrepresentation of God's ways; a system of thought devised by semi-pagans and is far from God's clear words.

The pagan world was familiar with the almost universal dependence on sacrifice as a means to approach the gods. Some Jewish commentators (Maimonides, Abravanel; Etz Hayim: 1999) say that sacrifice was given to Israel as a concession to their sharing of this ancient universal mindset after the incident with the golden calf. But Israel was forced to rethink its dependence on the Temple and temple-state with its destruction. In this sense, the destruction was a positive thing. That dependence had already become undermined by the number of Jews separated from it throughout the diaspora, and assemblies of Jews who could not go to the Temple each day but could gather for prayers at the times of daily sacrifices (as indicated by the synagogue service still today).

Pagans who were attracted to Paul and others misunderstood the Temple sacrifices in favor of their own understanding of sacrifice as a vehicle to gain favor, avoid wrath, commune with, or even imbibe the divine. Their first stage was to trade their pagan temples and shrines for the Temple in Jerusalem, and direct their still pagan mindset there to its sacrifices. When the Temple was destroyed, and sacrifices ended, the stage was set to frantically search for another bloody sacrifice (of a type they were familiar with among the dying and rising gods of paganism) that they created in Jesus. He became a mystical sacrifice in a heavenly temple that had served as the pattern for the earthly Temple. All things turn heavenly and mystical and the Torah standard of life is pushed to the side in the world now depicted as evil and physical. The golden calf now is looked for in heaven transformed into the cosmic Jesus.

Abel's Sacrifice

Is the "blood" foretold in the story of Cain and Abel?

Not too long ago a woman asked me a question about "Cain and Abel" in regard to atonement. After explaining to this person that sacrifice was highly over-rated, I was told, 'But God prefers blood---look at the offering made by Cain and Abel.' I was really being confronted with a suggestion that the Jesus of Christian mythology as a blood sacrifice, foreshadowed by scripture. That is not the message the Bible is conveying.

Higher criticism suggests that the story of Cain and Abel is a vehicle to show a struggle between cultures in early humanity. In other words, it shows the conflict between sedentary agriculturalists and nomadic herdsmen, one a development of hunting groups and the other of gatherers. It is true that in Hebrew qayin (Cain is actually Qayin) has a meaning of "one who aquires" (as his mother aquires him -*qanah*) in the way a real estate developer does. Agriculturally based societies require land aquisition. And so maybe this is a legitimate explanation of the story.

In the story we get the idea that Qayin is the bad guy, and Abel, that is Hevel, is the good guy. We still maintain a tradition of "the mark of Cain" as something along the lines of the antagonist in an apocalypse movie. Was Hevel so great? God certainly did not ordain that one occupation, herding or planting, was evil and the other holy.

When the Man and *Ḥāwwā* ("Eve") were put out of the Paradise, they were told the ground would be accursed because of their disobedience, there was no free ride but they would have to work out there food by the sweat of their brow. But not only this, but animals were killed to provide clothing for them. Remember that these were animals the first man and woman shared the Paradise with, and had never a reason to kill or eat them. Both of these were curses and tragedies brought about by their disobedience.

So Hevel's occupation with herds had nothing to do with some holiness. Coopting and killing fellow creatures was nothing to brag about. In fact, the name Hevel means "a vain, empty, nothing" and Hevel would indeed come to nothing, as his line ended right there at his death. On the other hand Qayin's line would continue on—yet to produce other murderers, exploiters, aquirers that we find among all peoples (even those who will descend from Seth).

What was so special about Hevel's animal sacrifice? Was it because it prefigures the future animal sacrifices of the Tabernacle and Temple worship?

> ...Qayin brought from the fruit of the earth an offering (*minḥah*) to YHWH. Hevel also brought, from the firstborns of his flock, and their fatty parts--and YHWH gave preference to Hevel and Hevel's offering. He did not give preference to Qayin and Qayin's offering so Qayin became very upset and his face was fallen. 4.3-5

Which product here is more valuable? What little I know of agriculture informs me that meat is more expensive than vegetable products. Hevel took from the very best he had to offer to YHWH. Qayin as well had gathered some vegetables to offer. I don't know if it's right economically or agriculturally or morally, but meat is more valuable than vegetables in the history of mankind. Hevel freely let go of the high dollar item and gave it to God.
Blood is not mentioned in this passage; it does not say at any time that God was thirsty or hungry for blood. But the scriptures do tell us later in the sacrificial system that both animal and vegetable (wheat) offerings were acceptable to God—according to the person's ability to offer from the best, from the firstfruits, of what he had. So in the passage we have here there is no future precedent to project back to Qayin and Hevel to think that God required blood or meat and grain (vegetables) were worthless to affect the procedures performed at the Temple.

The passage we have before us teaches the same thing taught elsewhere in the Tanak. God wants our best and when we freely offer it He approves of us. In fact, God asks for justice, for repentence, more than he asks for sacrificial offerings (whether vegetable or animal), and accepts the fruit of our lips as the substitute of sacrifice (see Hosea 14. A Christian translation might leave out the word calves or bulls).

We are to love YHWH with all of the heart, soul, and strength. Even though Hevel was a "nothing" he offered his gift to God from the best of his strength represented by his the best of his product, and to do this his intention had to be a result of his soul overcoming a natural desire to keep it for his own purposes, and to do these things requires love.

The text does not say that Qayin's vegetable offering was no good, but it does make a distinction through comparison with Hevel's. Qayin had the fruit of the earth before him and gathered. But we are not told he took the firstfruits, the very best, or anything particularly special to God. Hevel took from the *bekorot*, the first born, choice animals. The text purposely contrasts the two.

The lesson Christians should take from the story of Qayin and Hevel is the story of the "widow's mite" in which a poor widow gives the best and most she has to God as an offering (and it was not blood). In the story there Yeshua' says she gives more than all the rest:

> Mr 12.42 And there came, one destitute, widow, and cast in two mites,
> which are, a farthing.
> 43 And, calling near his disciples, he said to them—Verily, I say unto
> you, this destitute widow, more than they all, hath cast in, of those
> casting into the treasury;
> 44 For, they all, out of their surplus, cast in, but, she, out of her
> deficiency, all, as much as she had, cast in,—the whole of her living.

We can become angry when we perceive that God prefers another to us. God warns Qayin "... is it not that if you do well you will be preferred, but if you do not do well, an unintentional sin should crouch at your door and obsess you? You must master it."

For centuries now Christians have been torn by two obsessions. One that we, as Jews, as Yahwistic People, are truly the people preferred by God; and the other, is this matter of a preferred sacrifice.

Like Qayin they let a sin they feign ignorance of "crouching at the door" of their church dominate them. Because God showed preference for Israel, those outside Israel has borne animosity towards Israel, persecuting us, perverting the status of our relationship with God. They (yes, they) accuse us as "Cain."

> "Upon you may all the righteous blood shed upon the earth come, from the blood of the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar" (Matt.23.35). [see Hebrews, xi. 4, and I John, iii. 12 also]

It is very unlikely Yeshua ever said this though. From Josephus' War of the Jews (iv. 5, § 4) it appears that the murder of Z'karyah ben Berekyah took place thirty-four years after the death of Jesus! Just as Qayin sat with his face down turned, probably rationalizing that his sacrifice was as good or better than his brother's, perhaps disguising his anger against God, yet allowing it to grow to the murder of his own brother--ignoring God's warning—it is they make the mistake of Qayin, not the Jews. We are a tiny people who cast our whole lot with God. We are not Qayin. It is not our ancestors who came to be out the hate of a brother and his offering of devotion to God.
We could follow the lineages of people to prejudge all of them according to one coming from Qayin or Seth, and assign one as evil and the other blessed. But Israel was chosen and blessed—yet they did not always give all their heart, soul, and strength to obeying God. And even though the Christian religion claims some supernatural election to compete with or replace Israel, Christians have never done very well in keeping God in mind or obeying Him, and have in fact ignored God's warning about such things. Like Qayin's line, theirs has prospered materialistically. So how do you pit one against the other, one's offering to God compared to the other?

To do such a thing shows we are not looking at the example the Bible gives us. The offering, the sacrifice, is not the object at all. Do we enter into an "arms race" of sacrifices assigning animal better than vegetable, human better than animal, and finally an alleged divine human to be the best sacrifice of all at the table of a blood lusting, barbecue sniffing god? How very absurd.

Instead, we can look at what the text says, not retro-project a mystery religion mentality, and see the simple meaning of what is being presented. We must look at the intention, the devotedness, whole-heartedness, and the willingness to offer one's own livelihood (the best of our flock, as it were) to please God.

Another simple point that can be made is that Hevel ("nothing" "a vapor") and his sacrifice offering amounted to nothing. The sacrifice Hevel made certainly did not save him. It did not help him, Qayin was still protected by God, and it was Qayin's descendants that went on to help populate the world and create civilization. Doesn't this show that too much altogether can be made of sacrifice??

Is Yeshua the "Passover lamb"?

Yeshua is called "lamb" in a number of places in Christian Writings is context of a sacrifice that atones (cf., John 1.36; 1 Peter 1.19, and throughout Rev.). In 1 Corinthians, chapter 5 he is spoken of in relation to Passover, although it sounds more like he is bread rather than lamb:

> 7 Purge ye out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump,—even as ye are unleavened; for, our passover, hath even been sacrificed—Christ:

It has already been clearly shown that a lamb or kid goat did not atone for sin in the way understood by Christian theology. Still the Christian celebration of Easter is said to be modeled after the Passover, and one of the early controversies of the Church, that of the Quartodecimans, setting Easter in accordance with Nisan 14 according to the date of Passover also set Christians of Asia Minor against the Church of Rome. To this day it has not been conclusively argued whether the eucharistic episode was a Passover Seder or not. But does Yeshua parallel the lamb from the Passover story of Exodus 12?

1 Then spake Yahweh, unto Moses and unto Aaron, in the land of Egypt saying—2 This month, is, to you, a beginning of months,—the first, it is, to you, of the months of the year. 3 Speak ye unto all the assembly of Israel, saying, On the tenth of this month, then let them take to them, each man a lamb for his ancestral household, a lamb for a household. 4 But if the household be too small for a lamb, then shall he and his neighbour that is near unto his house take one, according to the number of souls,—each man according to his eating, shall ye number for the lamb. 5 A lamb without defect a male a year old, shall yours be,—from the sheep or from the goats, shall ye take it. 6 So shall it be yours, to keep, until the fourteenth day of this month,—then shall all the convocation of the assembly of Israel slay it between the two evenings. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and put upon the two door-posts and upon the upper-beam,—upon the houses wherein they are to eat it. 8 Then shall they eat the flesh, in the same night,—roast with fire, and with unleavened cakes, with bitter herbs, shall they eat it. 9 Do not eat of it underdone, nor cooked by boiling in water,—but roast with fire, its head with it, legs, and with its inward parts. 10 And ye shall let nothing thereof remain until morning,—but that which is left remaining until morning, in the fire shall ye consume. 11 And, thus, shall ye eat it,—your loins, girded, your sandals, on your feet, and, your staff, in your hand,—so shall ye eat it in haste, it is Yahweh's, passing over. 12 I will pass along, therefore, throughout the land of Egypt this night, and will smite every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from man even to beast,—and against all the gods of Egypt, will I execute judgments—I, Yahweh. 13 Then shall the blood serve you for a sign, on the houses wherein ye are, then will I behold the blood, and will pass over you,—and there shall be among you no plague to destroy, when I smite the laud of Egypt.

In the Passover lamb, matzah (unleavened bread), and maror (bitter herbs) are specifically mentioned. Later after many home celebrations came the traditional items of wine (which accompanies all celebration if not most meals in the ancient economy of the Mediterranean world and beyond), haroset (a sweet paste of fruits and nuts), and later still an egg. Why only wine and any type of bread in the Christian eucharist?

> In the Mazdean service, the celebrant consecrated the bread and the water which he mingled with the intoxicating juice of the Haoma [or, *soma*] prepared by him, and he consumed these foods during the performance of his sacrifice. These ancient usages were preserved in the Mithraic initiations, save for that of the Haoma, a plant unknown in the Occident, was substituted the juice of the vine. A loaf of bread and the goblet of water were placed before the mystic, over which the priest pronounced the sacred formula. This oblation of bread and water, with which undoubtedly wine was afterward mixed, is compared by the [Christian] apologists to the Christian sacrament of the Lord's Supper. . . A curious bas-relief recently published shows us the spectacle of this sacred repast (Fig. 38). Before two persons stretched upon a couch covered with pillows is placed a tripod bearing four tiny loaves of bread, each marked with a cross. Around them are grouped initiates . . . . These love feasts are evidently the ritual commemoration of the banquet which Mithra celebrated with the Sun before his ascension. From this mystical banquet, and especially from the imbibing of the sacred wine, supernatural effects were expected. The intoxicating liquor gave not only vigor of body and material prosperity, but wisdom of mind; it communicated to the neophyte the power to combat the malignant spirits, and what is more, conferred upon him as upon his god a glorious immortality. (Cumont: 1956, pp. 159-160.)

Here is a communion that the Christian Eucharist parallels much more than the Passover Seder (which is not a communion at all). The many parallels between the religion of Mithra and Christianity are well documented in the works of Cumont and elsewhere. The parallels are often disputed by Church Fathers as originating as demonic conspiracies to counterfeit Christianity even though the practices predate Christianity. Justin Martyr, who died purportedly in 165 CE, was already complaining in his *First Apology* (chapter 66):

> He had given thanks, said, "This do ye in remembrance of Me, this is My body;" and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, "This is My blood;" and gave it to them alone. Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done. For, that bread and a cup of water are placed with certain incantations in the mystic rites of one who is being initiated, you either know or can learn.

The symbol of the lamb's blood on the doorposts and lintel is a tempting one to use as signifying Jesus' blood as an agent of salvation. That would be reading too much into the story because as we know blood is not an agent of salvation. We can still ask for illustration sake, what type of salvation would be in question here as compared to the Christian notion of salvation?

In the Exodus story all the Egyptians were cursed by the plagues because on person, the Pharoah, would not relent to allow the Israelites to leave. The individual Egyptians were given no opportunity to avoid the plagues or even death. According to Christian thought everyone has the chance to accept the Christian savior. No parallel here. Even if the Egyptians were given the opportunity to choose to obey the God of Israel, we cannot say that they still would not have suffered or died from the plagues resulting from Pharoah's choice. But salvation in the Bible is a very real, tangible, experiential salvation—Israel is saved from its enemies in the here and now. In the Christian scriptures salvation is something for the hereafter, and we must take their word for it that people are "saved" for bliss, in spite of their dying (just as Christians or non-Christians do).

In the Exodus story deliverance from the Destroyer is applicable to the firstborn only. The firstborn of Israel alone were saved from death, while gentiles were given no opportunity to be "saved."
The blood on the doorposts and lintel were only part of the prescription, while Israelites were inside houses observing God's commandment of the Passover. Christianity looks over the attending obedience to extract the faith element, and considers observance to be "works" of the flesh rather than faith.

Another Type of Atonement?

Is human vicarious atonement totally absent from Jewish thought? Among the various sects of ancient Judaism you can find pagan influences, especially among the writings of apocalyptic movements that modified religious ideas from Persia and Persia's Zoroastrian ideas recycled through Hellenism. The figure of the messiah is transformed under those influences to become increasingly superhuman. This can be seen concerning the *Bar 'Enash* (a human, son of man) in Daniel and the Ethiopian rescension of Enoch (37-71), but this type of view was entertained by fringe groups strongly swayed by speculative views informed by pagan dualism and is later incorporated into Christianity.

Combine this with a belief in Judaism arising from times of great persecution and martyrdom involved the idea that these people had not died in vain. Considering that Jews were killed under the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes for observing the Shabbat, circumcising their children, and in the days of the Romans they were crucified in the droves, this is understandable. A mythological idea that such innocent martyrs who died for remaining true to God (*kibbud Hashem*, "sanctifying the Name") died on behalf of other Jews, sanctifying them before God.

This belief is shown in the account of the war against Antiochus by the Hasmoneans. A speech by the elderly Eleazar, tortured for refusing to recant Torah faith and eat unclean swine's flesh states:

> "You know, O God, that though I could have saved myself I am dying in these fiery torments for the sake of the [Torah]. Be merciful to your people and let our punishment be a satisfaction on their behalf. Make my blood their purification and take my life as a ransom for theirs." (4 Maccabees, 6.27-9. Charlesworth: 1985.)

Again, in the same source speaking of the seven martyred brothers and their mother:

> "These then, having consecrated themselves for the sake of God, are now honored not only with this distinction but also by the fact that through them our enemies did not prevail against our nation, and the tyrant was punished and our land purified, since they became, as it were, a ransom for the sin of our nation. Through the blood of these righteous ones and through the propitiation of their death the divine providence rescued Israel, which had been shamefully treated." (17.20-2)

Dates for the composition of 4 Maccabees range 19-118 CE and its style is thoroughly Hellenistic in accomplished Greek. To some extent Greek philosophy figures into the book concerning the immortality of the soul (9.22; 14.5ff.; 16.13; 17.12; 18.23), and the mother of the seven martyred "starlike" sons is told that they and she will be set with the moon in the heavens. A common belief among the Romans that the caesars and heroes, often deified after death, ascended to the heavens to join the stars (Cumont: 1922/1959, pp. 104-8). Yeshua was by no means the first human "king" or martyr to become divine and ascend to heaven.

Again, this popular folk idea of Jewish martyrs dying on behalf of the nation is most comparable to the idea of the scapegoat sent out to demons, the demons in this case being the gentiles who persecute Israel. The idea applies for martyrs killed because of their unswerving devotion to the laws of God as examples to other Jews to maintain their observance to God's Torah. It is no more than a lesson that says, 'These people died in order to remain faithful to God's Law while you have been lax in your devotion to it.' It is a "guilt trip" pointed at irreligious Jews rather than vicarious atonements. Otherwise, we must entertain a belief that all martyrs vicariously substituted for animal sacrifices, or that this was a normative part of Yahwism, and that Christianity simply limited this belief to one favorite sacrificial martyr.

The rabbinic commentary *Sifrei* on Deuteronomy (32.43) states that the killing of the children of Israel by gentiles atones for Israel. While Yeshua does fit in the role of a martyr, among others whose righteous blood was shed, he too stands as a witness against those who were not faithful to God by making compromises with pagans in order to inspire them to repentence.

In the Community Rule of the Dead Sea Scrolls the *yaḥāḏ* acts as atonement for Israel—not by dying, but by living in purity and obedience to God.

> "They [the community] are to atone for all those in Aaron who volunteer for holiness, and for those in Israel who belong to truth, and for the Gentile proselytes who join them in the community." (1QS 5.6)

> "They are to preserve faith in the land with self-control and a broken spirit, atoning for sin by working justice and suffering affliction.... They shall be 'the tested wall, the precious cornerstone [Isa 28.16] whose foundations shall neither be shaken nor swayed, a fortess, a Holy of Holies for Aaron, all of them knowing the Covenant of Justice and thereby offering a sweet savor. They shall be a blameless and true house in Israel, upholding the Covenant of eternal statutes. They shall be an acceptable sacrifice atoning for the land and ringing in the verdict against evil, so that perversity ceases to exist." (8.3, 10; see also 9.4)

Here then is the context for the atonement in the DSS also: being obedient to God's Torah made atonement. Yeshua's righteousness was his work of atonement, and his death as a martyr was to be a spark to ignite repentence to God's Torah. This is unlike the Christian doctrine of atonement.

Later, Christians, who reinterpreted Yeshua in terms of the pagan Mysteries in order to make him divine, would exaggerate his martyrdom into a human sacrifice (in a heavenly Temple reflecting the one that no longer existed on earth). They put aside his devotion to God and His Torah into the inefficacy of God's Torah, putting Yeshua on the level of pagans and pagan gods. Rather than a final sacrifice, or martyr for all mankind, Yeshua was one of millions of Jewish suffering servants murdered throughout the gentile history of persecution of Israel. The gentiles of Christianity continued in the ways of hate toward God's People. How much Jewish blood needs to be sacrificed for Christianity to achieve its atonement?

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"Messianic Jews":

JEWISH IDOLATRY REVISITED

Most families have skeletons in their closet, and the family of Israel is no exception.

God chose Israel over every people on earth to enter into covenant with Him. But when they regressed back into their needy natures they quickly grasped for an image to direct their worship towards.

Occasionally, some Christian group will send unsolicited emails to me convinced that they must make me worship Jesus. Recently I did some clean-up maintenance on the mail server and saw a gob of "Issues of Life" messages from a Christian who turns out to be named Cohen (his parents must be so proud), so I wrote an email asking him to cease sending this unwanted and unworthy mail cluttering up the mail server. He responded with a very animated message saying I *did need them* because I was a blasphemer and idolater! I just sent a smiley face back. I, unlike Mr. Cohen and other "Messianics," will not worship Yeshua (though I love him) or any man My God and Savior is YHWH, Who is without persons, parts, or incarnations.

In the past Israelites have worshipped other things than God. We know that soon after their covenant with God they wanted an graven image to represent Him, a golden bull calf like those worshipped among the Egyptians and Canaanites with whom Israel had grown much too familiar. Idols were the currency of religion, and the Israelites simply failed to embrace the concept that God was not a thing in the heavens above, or the earth below. It is true that YHWH is depicted in scripture in ways and words similar to other religions.

We also know the Israelites worshipped fertility goddesses, big breasted mothers the common people could relate to as life-givers. The worshipped the Lord, (not God but Baal which means "lord", such as the Lord Pe'or). Similar to the baal, they participated in some of the ancient rites of the dying-rising god, Dumuzi (Tammuz). All of these gods were personifications of nature manifested in the world around them, represented by images and statues. They knew there was an unseen power behind nature, and they sought to approach that power through some familiar shape. In spite of prohibitions against idolatry, and the teaching that God was not a man, or a thing that could even be depicted, they just could not accept it. A golden calf was excavated at the site of the ancient Israelite city of Dan. These Israelites were not worshipping other gods as much as they worshipped YHWH in a way similar to the heathens, focusing on an incarnation or manifestation of God!

What person, except one with a diminished mental capacity, could look at the endless bounds of creation and wonder what is beyond all this and imagine that God could be described with stone or wood, or that a man could be God? We have surely progressed and developed spiritually over sticks and stones and deified men, i.e., to the beliefs of One God taught in our Torah. Whatever means by which God has been limited by humans, to what can He truly be compared?

Perhaps not. To our sorrow we still have Jews who, like some of our less enlightened ancestors who stole away to the high places and sacred groves to worship the baals and asherahs, or tried to tell us YHWH could be worshipped in the form of a bull or calf, now worship the man Yeshua as a god. Who or what will they worship next? How long will there be Jews who want a gentile type god because their minds cannot accept a higher reality? YHWH is our God, YHWH alone (Deut 6:4), no carved thing represents Him (the Ten Principles), and He is not a man (Num 23:19). He alone is our Savior (Isaiah 44, 45). Nothing imagined by Christians in their writings can change that. He is the All, not just the local god of weather, or our favorite person. Sadly, "messianic Jews" need look no further than themselves to find idolatry and blasphemy against God. Pray that they return to their God.

Paul the Anti-Christ?

The Ebionites have held that Paul of Tarsus was not a follower of Yeshua from the beginning, so it is no surprise to see us expose him. But today the attacks come from Christians such as this anonymous contributor, JH.

We do not vouch for the accuracy of the article following, but offer it as is.

Paul fits the prophesies for the Antichrist --the first and worst beast of Revelation and of Daniel. Some of the prophesies that back this assertion are the following --the first verse is a prophesy, and the second illustrates it. (Sometimes there are many more verses than the ones shown for each bulleted item, and the list is not complete. Only one of each is shown per item):

• Wound in head that was healed miraculously (Rev. 13:3, Acts 22:11-15);
• Roman citizen (Rev. 17:9, Acts 22:29);
• A Jew (Dan. 7:4, Gal. 2:15);
• Deceives the whole world until the very end (Dan. 11:36, Gal. 1:1);
• Large followings who are amazed at him (Rev. 13:3-4, Acts 9:21-22);
• Boasts and brags about himself (Rev. 13:5, 2Cor. 12:1);
• Makes himself greater than the teachers and disciples and apostles (Rev. 13:5, 2Cor. 12:11);
• Claims to be equal to the Anointed One (the Christ) (Dan. 11:37, 1Tim. 2:5-7);
* Changes the laws and observances (Dan. 7:25, Constantine's Edict of 321 CE);
• Makes a new covenant with many (Dan. 9:27, Hebr. 8:8-13);
• Puts aside the daily sacrifice (Dan. 11:31, Hebr. 10:11-14);
• Brings persecutions on the 'saints' (followers of the Mosaic Law) (Rev. 14:12, 1Ths. 2:14-16);
• Says unheard-of things against God and heaven (Rev. 13:6, Gal. 4:9);
• Does not encourage the affection for or the valuing of women (Dan. 11:37, 1Cor. 7:8);
• Gains backing of another extremely powerful, earthly beast (Rev. 13:12, "Edict of Milan" 313 CE);
• Antichrist and earthly beast successfully establish themselves worldwide (Dan. 8:12, First Council of Nicaea 325 CE);
• Images (banned by Mosaic Law) are set up by the earthly beast for adoration (Rev. 13:15, Second Council of Nicaea 787 CE);
• Followers of the beast must use a mark or sign on hand and forehead (Rev. 13:17, "Sign of the Cross");
• Earthly beast will enforce worship of first beast (Antichrist) under penalty of death (Dan. 7:21, Inquisitions);
• The 'Abominator' must be seen in an extension or wing added to the Temple (Dan. 9:27, Council of Carthage 397 CE);
• He promises peace (Luke 12:51, Hebr. 12:14);
* The elect (who remain true to the laws of God) will be persecuted (Dan. 7:25, 1Ths. 2:14-16);
• The elect will often be hated, even by half of their families, sometimes by loved ones (Luke 12:52, 2Cor. 6:14);
• With the earthly beast military fortresses will be overcome, and his places of worship will resemble fortresses adorned with precious stones and gifts (Dan. 11:38, Constantine's basilicas in Constantinople).

If you have any doubts about the deceptiveness of Paul's teachings, here are more scriptures in full that expose Paul's denials of the Law and Prophets and the Anointed One. Remember, Paul says that he is an apostle(Rom. 1:1) and prophet (1Cor. 14:37). Here is what the Law says about prophets:

> Deut. 13:1 If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, 2 and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," 3 you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him;

> serve him and hold fast to him. 5 That prophet or dreamer must be put to death, because he preached rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery; he has tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

There should *not be a single law or ordinance that he tells others to violate*, but this list below gives over forty, and many have multiple instances. I have just covered the more obvious ones that should require no explanation of their contradictions. These do not include distortions of fact and logic that would require some comment. One or two apparent contradictions might be explained away with enough effort --but not this many!

It was prophesied that someone like Paul would come and deceive everyone:

> Matt. 24:24 For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect --if that were possible.
> Rev. 13:14 Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth.

It is time that the arrogance, rebellion against laws that work, and the gross distortions are recognized for what they are. They have caused too much damage already. Paul's seditious teachings have caused the confusion and corruption that plague our society and our relations with the world.

Paul's policies are to blame for much --if not all-- of the problems of the world. Paul's warped teachings have distorted Christianity beyond recognition from what it was supposed to be, two thousand years ago. Our culture, whether we like it or not, is very heavily influenced by Paul's deceptions. And, our military and diplomatic policy is shaped by our culture.

For instance: Islam has its own prophesies of the Antichrist, and some outspoken Islamic leaders have called the USA 'the great satan'. What if there is a shred of truth to that charge? Our own people have maintained that many of our actions in the Middle East wars were influenced by lies and deceptions, the very essence of Paul's discourse. Careful examination of how Paulist distortions have infiltrated our dealings may bring about positive developments on a world-wide scale. Religion, ethics and government all need fixing --and *not* with more of the same spin doctoring and evasions. That is how we got into our current troubles. We were paying homage to the wrong principles --idolatry at its worst.

Also, our domestic policies have been polluted by Paulist distortions --they have brought about chaos and harm in our treatments of welfare problems, and our attitudes towards sexual discrimination and related issues. Paul has some very questionable prejudices in these areas.

The best argument for the divine origin of scripture is not in some long-ago account of a miracle, or in long and doubtful arguments. **I feel the best demonstration of the legitimacy of scripture is that it predicted in detail the Antichrist/beast Paul, and --just as scripture predicted-- billions of people were deceived for thousands of years by so many glaring deceptions. It is too large in scale and much too detailed to be either chance or human invention.**

That fact alone is incredible and amazing --the enormity of the deception, and the way it was documented, and the glaring denials and contradictions by Paul that everyone missed for so many centuries. The essence of what 'The Antichrist' means is replacing, or denying The Christ. In this case, remember --'denying someone' does not mean, 'denying their *existence*'. It means 'denying *what they teach*'. That is a critical difference. We will not find the Antichrist saying that Jesus the Christ never existed. In fact, he exaggerates in the opposite direction, calling him God, and then, claiming to be the messenger of the Divine Jesus the Christ with a new message that was entrusted only to him.

The problem is, the whole message of the Antichrist is a lie, but he is too clever to do the most obvious thing we expect of liars. The Messiah is the specially appointed human who is to establish ethical and compassionate leadership for the whole planet.

When we hear that this Antichrist is out to replace or deny someone, we expect that the liar will insult and discredit that person. Instead, Paul does something very clever and unexpected. He lies, but he grossly exaggerates the importance of this Anointed One.

Instead of a specially chosen member of the human race to lead humanity on Earth, Paul calls him divine instead of human, and equal to the God of Gods, and ruler of the universe. He says that Jesus as the Christ existed before all creation, and God

the Father created the universe through him.

Then, Paul states that he himself is the Special Messenger of the New Covenant of this Divine Son of God. This New Covenant that he, Paul brings, replaces the previous Law and is superior to it. He conveniently ignores the fact that parts of the Law that he is replacing state that they have been *established for all time*. The Law and Prophets will not pass away before the rest of the universe.

To support his New Covenant, he starts with vague and questionable statements, and uses convoluted and questionable logic to confuse his audience. Paul then states that his murky arguments establish certain principles he calls his New Covenant. Paul says that his New Covenant is 'new' because it is perfect, and it replaces the imperfect and sin-causing 'Old Testament' which then will disappear and die off.

This is one of Paul's biggest lies --the 'New Covenant' which is actually spoken of in the scriptures replaces nothing of the 'Old Covenant'. The 'New Covenant' means that the 'Old Covenant' becomes indelibly written into the thoughts and actions of everyone, forcing out the tendency for evil and corruption. This happens after the end times, when the Antichrist and the rebellious angels of Satan are removed from power over us.

Paul completely changes the meaning of 'New Covenant'. He claims that only he, Paul, knows what God really wants, and he states that everyone must have complete faith in the truth of his ideas, despite the fact that his ideas supplant the 'Old Covenant'. Paul, the Antichrist, does the opposite of what all the prophets did. All of the prophets praised, supported and clarified the Law --only Paul seeks to replace the Law, and he even insults and criticizes the Law as poor, miserable, and fit only for sinners. Paul's New Covenant is, according to Paul, perfect and superior to God's inferior covenant.

It is time that the insanity of this rebellion was stopped, and it is time that we all tell Paul and his epistles to go to hell. Literally.

Here is a list of a few of the MORE OBVIOUS deceptions:

1. DO NOT GO TO THE GENTILES

Matt. 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "**Do not go among the Gentiles** or enter any town of the Samaritans.

Acts 18:6 But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! **I am clear of my responsibility**. From now on **I will go to the Gentiles**."
Acts 22:21 [Paul says:] "Then the **Lord said to me, `Go; I will send you** far away **to the Gentiles**.'"

2. NO FOREIGNER UNCIRCUMCISED IS TO ENTER MY SANCTUARY

Gal. 5:2 [Paul says:] Mark my words! **I, Paul, tell you** that if you let yourselves be **circumcised**, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 6 For in Christ Jesus **neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value**. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.
Rom. 2:29 [Paul says:] No, **a man is a Jew** if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, **not by the written code.** Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

Gen. 17:13 Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. **My covenant in your flesh** is to be an **everlasting** covenant. 14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant."
Ezek. 44:6 Say to the rebellious house of Israel, `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Enough of your **detestable** practices, O house of Israel! 7 In addition to all your other detestable practices, you brought **foreigners uncircumcised in heart and flesh into my sanctuary, desecrating my temple** while you offered me food, fat and blood, and you broke my covenant. 9 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: **No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and flesh is to enter my sanctuary**, not even the foreigners who live among the Israelites.

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3. SELF-PROCLAIMED THIRTEENTH APOSTLE WHO CONTRADICTS INSTRUCTIONS

Matt. 10:1 He called **his twelve disciples** to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. 2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. 5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following **instructions**: **"Do not go among the Gentiles** or enter any town of the Samaritans.

Rom. 11:13 [Paul says:] I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as **I am the apostle to the Gentiles**, I make much of my ministry

4. SATAN RULES THE KINGDOM OF THE AIR; PAUL SAYS, 'MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR'!

Eph. 2:2 [Paul says:] in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the **ruler of the kingdom of the air,** the spirit who is now at work in those who are **disobedient**.

1Ths. 4:17 [Paul says:] After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds **to meet the Lord in the air**. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

5. ADAM: NOT THE 'FIRST MAN', AND HE WAS WITH EVE WHEN THEY WERE DECEIVED

1Tim. 2:13 [Paul says:] For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And **Adam was not the one deceived**; it was the **woman** who was deceived and became a sinner.

Gen. 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her **husband, who was with her**, and he ate it.

1Cor. 15:45 [Paul says:] So it is written: "The **first man Adam** became a living being" ; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. ['*first* man'? It is not so written --look it up for yourself!]

6. THE ANTICHRIST WILL MAKE HIMSELF EQUAL TO THE ANOINTED ONE

1Tim. 2:5 [Paul says:] For there is **one God** and **one mediator between God and men**, the man Christ Jesus, 7 **And for this purpose I was appointed** a herald and an **apostle --I am** telling the truth, **I am** not lying --and **I am** a teacher of the **true faith to the Gentiles**.
2Tim. 4:7 [Paul says:] **I have** fought the good fight, **I have** finished the race, **I have** kept the faith. 8 [Paul says:] Now there is in store **for me** the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, **will award to me** on that day ...
Gal. 6:14 [Paul says:] May **I** never boast except in the **cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**, through which the **world has been crucified to me**, and **I to the world**.
Gal. 6:17 [Paul says:] Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for **I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.**
1Tim. 1:15 [Paul says:] Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners --of whom **I am the worst**.
2Cor. 12:9 [Paul says:] But he said **to me**, "My grace is sufficient for **you**, for my power is made **perfect in weakness**." Therefore **I will boast all the more** gladly about **my weaknesses**, so that Christ's power may rest **on me**.
1Cor. 14:37 [Paul says:] If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what **I am writing** to you is **the Lord's command**.
1Cor. 7:7 [Paul says:] **I wish that all men were as I am**. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. 8 Now to the unmarried and the widows I say: It is good for them to **stay unmarried, as I am**.

Exod. 3:14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: `I AM has sent me to you.'"
1Cor. 15:10 [Paul says:] But by the grace of **God I am what I am**, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, **I worked harder than all of them** --yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.
Acts 27:23 [Paul says:] Last night an angel of the **God whose I am** and whom I serve stood beside me

7. NOT BRINGING PEACE

Eph. 2:14 [Paul says:] For in Christ Jesus **is our peace**, who has made the two one and **has destroyed the barrier, the**

dividing wall of hostility, 15 by **abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations**. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus **making peace**, 16 and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. 17 He came and **preached peace to you** who were far away and **peace** to those who were near.

Matt. 10:34 [Jesus says:] **"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace** to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Luke 12:51 Do you think I came to bring **peace on earth? No**, I tell you, but division.

8. I CAME TO BRING DIVISIONS

1Cor. 1:10 [Paul says:] I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be **no divisions among you** and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Luke 12:51 [Jesus says:] Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but **division**. 52 From now on there will be five in one **family divided against each other**, three against two and two against three.

9. ORDER AND DISORDER

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was **formless and empty**, **darkness** was over the **surface of the deep**, and the Spirit of God was **hovering** over the waters.
Isa. 24:1 See, the LORD is going to **lay waste** the earth and **devastate** it; he will **ruin** its face and **scatter** its inhabitants--
Isa. 34:11 The desert owl and screech owl will possess it; the great owl and the raven will nest there. **God will stretch out over Edom the measuring line of chaos** and the plumb line of **desolation**.
Isa. 45:7 I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and **create disaster**; I, the LORD, do all these things.

1Cor. 14:33 [Paul says:] **For God is not a God of disorder but of peace**...

10. NOTHING IN THE LAW TELLS WOMEN TO BE SILENT

Num. 27:7 **"What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right**. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance among their father's relatives and turn their father's inheritance over to them. 8 "Say to the Israelites, `If a man dies and leaves no son, **turn his inheritance over to his daughter**.
Judg. 4:4 **Deborah, a prophetess**, the wife of Lappidoth, **was leading Israel** at that time. 5 **She held court** under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the **Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided**.
Judg. 5:24 "Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent-dwelling women. 26 Her hand reached for the tent peg, her right hand for the workman's hammer. **She struck Sisera, she crushed his head**, she shattered and pierced his temple. 31 **"So may all your enemies perish, O LORD**! But may they who love you be like the sun when it rises in its strength." **Then the land had peace forty years**.

1Tim. 2:11 [Paul says:] A woman should learn in **quietness and full submission**. 12 **I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.** 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15 But women will be saved through childbearing --if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.
1Cor. 14:33 [Paul says:] ... As in **all** the congregations of the saints, 34 **women should remain silent** in the churches. They are **not allowed to speak**, but must be in submission, **as the Law** says. 35 If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is **disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church**.

11. THE HEART IS DECEITFUL

Rom. 10:10 [Paul says:] For **it is with your heart that you believe and are justified**, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Jer. 17: 9 The **heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure**. Who can understand it?
Matt. 15:19 [Jesus says:] **For out of the heart come evil** thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.

12. BECOME LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN

1Cor. 13:11 [Paul says:] When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, **I put childish ways behind me**.

Matt. 18:3 And [Jesus] said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and **become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven**. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

13. UNLESS YOU OBSERVE THE LAW YOU WILL BE LEAST IN HEAVEN

Deut. 32:4 He is the Rock, **his works are perfect,** and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.
Ps. 111:2 **Great are the works** of the LORD; they are pondered by all who delight in them.
Isa. 40:8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands **forever**."
Zech. 7:12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and **would not listen to the law or to** the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through **the earlier prophets**. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

Matt. 7:20 [Jesus says:] Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. 21 "Not everyone who says to me, `Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who **does the will** of my Father who is in heaven. 5:19 Anyone who breaks one of the **least of these commandments and teaches** others to do the same will be called **least in the kingdom of heaven**, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
Luke 16:17 [Jesus says:] It is **easier for heaven and earth to disappear** than for the **least stroke** of a pen to **drop out of the Law**.

Gal. 6:14 [Paul says:] For sin shall not be your master, because you are **not under law**, but under grace. 15 **Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything**; what counts is a new creation.
Rom. 3:28 [Paul says:] For we maintain that a man is justified by faith **apart from observing the law**.
Rom. 11:6 [Paul says:] And if by grace, then it is **no longer by works**; if it were, grace would no longer be grace. .
Gal. 2:16 [Paul says:] know that a **man is not justified by observing the law**, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because **by observing the law no one will be justified.**

Gal. 3: 23 [Paul says:] Before this faith came, **we were held prisoners by the law**, locked up until faith should be revealed. 25 Now that faith has come, we are **no longer under** the supervision of **the law**.

Gal. 4:9 [Paul says:] But now that you know God --or rather are known by God --how is it that you are turning back to those **weak and miserable principles**? Do you wish to be **enslaved by them all over again**?

Col. 2:14 [Paul says:] **having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.** 20 Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you **submit to its rules**: 23 Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Eph. 2:8 [Paul says:] For it is by grace **you have been saved, through faith** --and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 **not by works**, so that no one can boast.

14. ENTITLEMENTS FOR THOSE NOT WORKING ARE DECREED BY THE LORD

2Ths. 3:10 [Paul says:] For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ""**If a man will not work, he shall not eat**."

Lev. 19:10 Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them **for the poor and the alien**. I am the LORD your God.

Lev. 23:22 "`When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the **poor and the alien**. I am the LORD your God.'"

Zech. 7:10 **Do not oppress** the widow or the fatherless, the alien or **the poor**. ...

Matt. 25:34 [Jesus says:] "Then the King will say to those on his right, `Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For **I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, ... whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'**

15 Omitted

16. THE MESSIAH COMES FOR THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL

Matt. 15:24 He [Jesus] answered, "I was sent **only to the lost sheep of Israel**."

Rom. 1:16 [Paul says:] I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of **everyone** who believes: first for the **Jew, then for the Gentile**. 9:30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith;

17. GOD HATES ALL LYING AND DECEPTIONS

Ps. 101:7 **No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house**; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence.
Ezek. 13:19 ... **By lying** to my people, who listen to lies, **you have killed** those who should not have died and have spared those who should not live.
John 8:44 [Jesus says:] You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he **lies**, he speaks his native language, for he is a **liar and the father of lies**.

Romans 3:7 [Paul says:] **If through my lies God's truth abounds to His glory**, why am I still being condemned as a sinner?
Phil. 1:18 [Paul says:] But **what does it matter**? The important thing is that in every way**, whether in pretense or in truth**, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice,

2Cor. 3:13 [Paul says:] **We are not like Moses**, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. 14 But their **minds were made dull,** for to this day **the same veil remains when the old covenant is read**. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.
Hebr. 8:6 [Paul says:] But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the **covenant** of which he is mediator is **superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.**
Hebr. 8:13 [Paul says:] **By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.**
Gal. 3:25 [Paul says:] Now that faith has come, **we are no longer under the supervision of the law**.
Gal. 4:9 [Paul says:] But now that you know God --or rather are known by God --how is it that you are turning back to those **weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them** all over again?

Acts 24:10 When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied: "I know that for a number of years you have been a judge over this nation; so I gladly make my defense. ... **I believe everything that agrees with the Law and that is written in the Prophets,**
Rom. 7:6 [Paul says:] But now, by dying to what once bound us, **we have been released from the law** so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and **not in the old way of the written code**.

18. DOES GOD SEND A DELUSION SO THAT 'ALL WILL BE CONDEMNED'?

Exod. 34:4 ... And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the **compassionate** and **gracious** God, **slow to anger**, **abounding in love and faithfulness**,
Zech. 1:2 "The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. 3 Therefore tell the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: **`Return to me,' declares the LORD Almighty, `and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty.**
Joel 2:13 Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is **gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.**
1Sam. 15:29 He who is the Glory of Israel **does not lie** or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind."

2Ths. 2:11 [Paul says:] For this reason **God sends them a powerful delusion** so that they will **believe the lie** 12 and **so that all will be condemned** who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.
[Paul teaches that God deceives people!? Only Satan is the Deceiver and Father of Lies.]

19. GOD'S PROMISE IS ONLY FOR THE CHOSEN REMNANT OF ISRAEL WHO CALLS

Joel 2:27 Then you will know that I am **in Israel,** that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will **my people** be shamed. 32 And **everyone** who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for **on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem** there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, **among the survivors** whom the **LORD calls**.
Matt. 7:21 [Jesus says:] "**Not everyone** who says to me, `Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Acts 2:21 [Paul says:] And **everyone** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'
Rom. 10:12 For there is **no difference between Jew and Gentile** --the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "**Everyone** who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

20. DO NOT MULTIPLY YOUR WORDS IN PRAYING

Eph. 6:18 [Paul says:] And pray in the Spirit on **all occasions with all kinds of prayers** and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.
1Ths. 3:10 **Night and day we pray most earnestly** that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.
5:17 **pray continually**;

Matt. 6:7 [Jesus says:] And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their **many words**. Mark 12:40 They devour widows' houses and **for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely**."

21. THE GREAT DECEIVER WILL CLAIM TO BE EQUAL TO THE MESSIAH

1Tim. 2:5 [Paul says:] For there is **one God** and **one mediator between God and men**, the man Christ Jesus, 7 **And for this purpose I was appointed** a herald and an **apostle --I am** telling the truth, **I am** not lying --and **I am** a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.
Gal. 6:17 [Paul says:] Finally, let no one cause me trouble, for **I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.**

Jer. 14:14 Then the LORD said to me, "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you **false** visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own minds.

Matt. 24:5, Mark 13:6 [Jesus says:] Many will come in my name, claiming, `I am he,' **and will deceive many**.
Gal. 1:1 [Paul says:] Paul, an apostle **--sent** not from men nor by man, but **by Jesus Christ and God the Father**, who raised him from the dead--
last, and the servant of all."
Luke 14:10 [Jesus says:] But when you are invited, **take the lowest place**, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, `Friend, move up to a better place.' Then you will be honored in the presence of all your fellow guests. 11 For **everyone who exalts himself** will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Our Liberation

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